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A TREATISE

ON THE

DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT:

BY

CHARLES JERRAM, M.A.

VICAR OF CHOBHAM, SURREY.

"There is no article of the Christian faith, which, considered in itself, is more deserving our closest attention, than that of our redemption by Jesus Christ: this is the very corner-stone of the fabric:—against this, accordingly, every framer of a new hypothesis directs his entire force; this once shaken, the whole structure falls to ruin."—MAGEE.

"The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."—Levit. xvii. 11.

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TO

THE RIGHT REVEREND

CHARLES RICHARD,

LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.

My Lord,

I feel it to be equally due to the relation in which I stand to your Lordship, as my Diocesan, and to the respect I have for your high character, to present this Treatise, on a fundamental Doctrine, for your kind acceptance: nor could I forego the wish of introducing it to the public under the sanction of your Lordship's name. This you have kindly permitted; and I need not add, that, if the work itself be found at all worthy of its patronage, my utmost wishes will be gratified. It will make its way in the Christian world; and will not be useless in the cause for which it was undertaken.

I am, my Lord,
Your Lordship's
most dutiful
and obliged humble Servant,
CHARLES JERRAM.

Chobham House,
April 28, 1828.

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PREFACE.

Christianity, like every other system, consists of certain leading principles, which are interwoven with its very texture, and have as close and intimate a connexion with each other, as the links of a chain;—if one be broken, the whole is dissolved.

That the doctrine of the Atonement forms one of these principles has never been denied, except by those who have refined upon Christianity, till it can scarcely be distinguished from a system of ethics. Of its *importance* we may easily judge, from the repeated attempts which have been made to overthrow it, and the totally different aspect which a renunciation of it has invariably

given to the whole of the Christian religion. Infidels, who never attack particular doctrines but for the sake of destroying the system, have directed no small portion of their efforts to the subversion of this great article of the faith, well knowing that, if *this* falls, "it falls like a strong man," carrying along with it the pillars of Christianity. Nor have some professed advocates for the Christian religion been less industrious than infidels to exclude it from its place among Christian doctrines. These, affecting a more than ordinary portion of the powers of reason and of Christian candour, have conceived the design of converting unbelievers to the faith of the gospel, by removing what seems to be principally offensive: as if, by taking away the reproach of the cross, Christianity could be promoted, and its enemies induced to become its friends. Nor has *artifice* been wanting, when argument has failed, to subvert this pillar of Christianity. Some, under the pretext of being advocates for the Atonement, have endeavoured to undermine it, by renouncing the *doctrine*, and retaining the *name*. These have chosen to call this doctrine, as it has been for ages understood by all deno-

minations of Christians, any thing but the *Atonement:* and have appropriated this term to a set of opinions, which bear no more resemblance to the ideas which it has hitherto been accustomed to designate, than the writings of Socinus to the epistles of St. Paul. This artifice has so far succeeded, as sometimes to prevent the alarm which a naked statement of their real sentiments would have excited. Those, who have been accustomed to associate the Atonement of Christ with the foundation of a sinner's hope, might have been startled at an avowed opposition to it; but the name being still retained, though the doctrine be given up, the charge they are persuaded to make appears less formidable.

It was against objections to the Atonement, appearing under this deceptive garb, that, four and twenty years ago, I published some Letters on this Doctrine. These have long been out of print; and I have often intended to revise and republish them, and have even announced that intention to the public: but circumstances, which I could not control, have, from time to time, prevented me. When, however, more leisure enabled me

to set about this revision, I could not persuade myself to send them forth in their original form. They were written under circumstances somewhat local and personal; and had more the appearance than I could wish of controversy with an individual of a party; and, being chiefly intended for the neighbourhood in which they were composed, they did not go so fully into the subject as seemed necessary for a more general circulation. I therefore thought it expedient to adopt a different plan, and to write "A Treatise on the Doctrine of the Atonement," which might take in the whole of the subject, and be divested of all allusion to any individual, except so far as he might be considered as the representative of a party, and his objections be viewed as those of his class. What was, therefore, at first only a pamphlet, has now grown into a volume; and, with the exception of the order and arrangement of the original Letters, it may be considered almost as a new work.

The great object I have had in view was to set the scriptural doctrine of the Atonement in a clear and full point of view; to separate it from

all extraneous matter, and minute refinements; to give a plain answer to the objections brought against it; to establish it on the clearest scriptural evidence; and to rescue it from the charge of being founded on principles contrary to the constituted order and fitness of things. The principal merit of the work (if it have any) consists in its laying before the reader a connected view of the whole subject. Other works of great value have been published on the subject; but none, so far as I am aware, after the same plan, and with the same copiousness as this. The standard work of Archbishop Magee consists of two most valuable Discourses, with nearly two volumes of Dissertations, on various subjects connected with this doctrine. But though most of these topics grow out of the Atonement, yet they are detached, and are not so discussed as to form a regular and consecutive argument in support of the doctrine. The matter contained in them is most abundant; the Dissertations, for the most part, are very elaborate; the talent and learning they display are of the highest order; and the conclusion to which they always lead, is the truth of this fundamental doctrine: nor would

any one, who writes upon the Atonement, stand excused before the public, who did not avail himself of these copious and most valuable materials. But still, for the reasons just assigned, they do not constitute a regular Treatise on the subject, and something further was wanted to give a clear and connected view of the whole.

There is one part of my Treatise on which I think it right to make an observation or two. It is well known that the Divine Institution of Primitive Sacrifice has again been recently disputed by Mr. Davison. This author—(to whom we are indebted for the most comprehensive view that, as far as I know and believe, has ever yet been given to the public of "the Structure and Use of Prophecy,"—a work which I shall run no risk in predicting will be read and admired, as long as the internal texture of the holy scriptures shall give evidence of its divine Inspiration, and the argument from prophecy shall be pre-eminent among the proofs of our holy religion)—under the idea that, to have conveyed, in the incipient state of religion, a development of its ultimate plan,—as he conceives would have been the case, if

primitive sacrifice had been appointed by God,—would be contrary to that gradual progression in its discoveries, which he finds in every other part of the holy scriptures,—thought it right to investigate, more at large than had hitherto been done, the subject of the Divine Origin of Sacrifice; and, in so doing, has arrived at a negative conclusion upon it. This argument has been most minutely examined by Mr. Faber, in his "Treatise on the Origin of Primitive Sacrifice;" and, I cannot but think, most satisfactorily refuted. The point in controversy, however, was of too much importance, as connected with the doctrine of the Atonement, to be passed over without minute attention; because, if Mr. Davison's view be correct, it deprives this doctrine, if not of one of its *essential supports*, yet certainly, in my opinion, of one of its most *convincing arguments;* and would give an advantage—though Mr. Davison thinks not—to Socinians, of which they would make a powerful, if not a fatal, use. I have, therefore, gone very fully into this subject in my Treatise; and I wish here to acknowledge my obligations to Mr. Faber for his very seasonable and able publication, of which I have not failed

to take advantage, when it could be brought to bear upon my argument.

I have only to add that, in the use I have occasionally made of the appellations Socinian and Orthodox, I mean neither the former as a reproach, nor the latter as an assumption; but have adopted them simply as terms of a well-understood distinction, and as avoiding, in the former case, a concession which seems to be implied in the use of the term Unitarian. In stating objections, I have not given any names as authority, in order to avoid the appearance of personality; but the reader may be assured of the fidelity of the quotations, and also that they comprise the substance of the objections usually alleged against the doctrine of the Atonement.

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ON THE

DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

SECTION I.

CHAPTER I.

The Importance of the Doctrine.

The doctrine of the Atonement is of vital importance. It involves all the peculiarities of the Christian system, and is interwoven with all its principal doctrines, precepts, and privileges. It has its origin in the fall and ruin of man. It derives its efficacy from the Divinity of the Saviour, and his Assumption of human nature. His Death, Resurrection, and Session at the right hand of God, are either essential parts of it, or inseparably connected with it. The duties of repentance and faith have a direct reference to it, and have nothing in them of an evan-

gelical nature, except as arising out of it. Our hopes of pardon and future happiness are built upon it; our strongest motives to love and obedience are drawn from it, and all our joy and peace in believing spring out of it. In short, it involves the charter by which we hold our title to eternal life; and is identified with all that is substantial in present enjoyment, or vast in future expectation. It is obvious, therefore, that whatever relates to this doctrine is of the greatest importance; that whatever affects its stability, strikes at the foundation of all that is interesting to man; and, that if this be overturned, all the blessings of redemption are annihilated at once.

I make these remarks at the commencement, because many, who oppose the doctrine of the Atonement, represent it as a matter of comparative unimportance, and as chiefly deserving of attention from the relation it bears to the attributes of the Deity, and the views we should entertain of his benignity to man. If this were really the case, the subject might be discussed with as little interest or emotion as any rival systems of Philosophy. We should feel that, as an abstract truth, or as one which might materially affect our views of the Supreme Being,

it may deserve a very close investigation, and pleasure may result from ariving at some degree of certainty respecting it: but, after all, it does not materially affect our interest, and we may be equally safe, though not equally enlightened, on whichever side we form our opinion. But this is far from being the fact. The doctrine has an inseparable connection with the entire system of religion, and enters essentially into the whole experience and hopes of the Christian. If he find, on enquiry, that he is wrong in this article of his faith, he is wrong in every other; and he will have every thing to begin afresh. He must find a new mode of obtaining pardon of sin and peace of conscience; a new way of approaching God in prayer; new resources in the day of affliction; new supports and consolations in the hour of death. It will essentially change his views of sin and its penalty; of man and his ruin; of Christ and his salvation; of the Holy Spirit and his agency; of angels and their employment in the government of the world, and the object to which it is directed; of the state of the dead, and their joys or sorrows; of heaven and hell, and, in short, of the whole system of revealed religion. Let it then be distinctly understood, that it is not for a single and insulated doctrine that we are now contending;—for an

opinion which may be detached from the articles of faith, and no injury ensue to the rest; it is for the first link in the chain,—the key-stone of the arch—the foundation on which the temple of truth is built. It is the GREAT ATONING SACRIFICE, which calls for our attention; that atonement which was prefigured by Abel's sacrifice, and was foreshadowed by every succeeding victim, till "now once, in the end of the world hath Christ appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," and hath "by his own blood entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." "It is worthy of remark," says an able writer and biblical critic, in his comment on Noah building an altar, "that as the old world began with sacrifice, so did the new. *Religion,* or the proper mode of worshipping the Divine Being, is the invention or institution of God himself; and *sacrifice,* in the *act*-and *design,* is the *essence* of religion. *Without sacrifice actually offered or implied, there never was, there never can be, any religion.* Even in the *heavens,* a Lamb is represented before the throne of God, as newly slain."[1]

[1] Dr. Adam Clarke on Gen. ix. 20.

CHAPTER II.

A General Statement of the Doctrine.

With regard to the doctrine itself, it has a special relation to the reconciliation of man with God; for it is the Atonement of Christ which opens the way for this reconciliation. The Scriptures, as we well know, represent the human race as having, by transgression, incurred the displeasure of God, and brought themselves under the sentence of condemnation. Now the Truth and Justice of the divine Being seem to raise an insuperable barrier against the reversing of this dreadful penalty by human means. In this difficulty, God himself provides a remedy. He sends his own Son into the world, who makes an atoning sacrifice; and, as St. Peter asserts, "suffers for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God."[2] With this offering God is well pleased. He can now "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus;" and out of regard to this sacrifice, he offers pardon and salvation to every penitent sinner.

[2] 1 Pet. iii. 18.

This is a brief statement of the doctrine of the Atonement, and comprehends all that is essential respecting it. It may be summed up in the following particulars. FIRST, *The Death of Christ upon the cross was an atoning and expiatory sacrifice.* SECONDLY, *God, out of regard to it, can consistently pardon sin.* THIRDLY, *In conferring this blessing, he has regard to it as the condition and consideration on account of which he bestows it.* These points will, I trust, be fully made out in the course of this discussion. At present I would merely observe, that when we speak of the death or sacrifice of Christ as being the only foundation of a sinner's pardon, we mean no more than that it is the only *condition and consideration,* on account of which God does actually forgive sin. It is not necessary that we should prove that this death is an *exact equivalent* for the demerit of transgression, or that it forms such *a complete satisfaction* for the sins of the world, as rigid justice might demand; or that it lays God under such an obligation to cancel the debt of sin, as a creditor would be laid, who has received the full extent of his demands. These are points which have no *essential* connexion with the doctrine of the Atonement. They may be thought to grow out of it, and may be the subject of fair discus-

sion among Christians; but they do not necessarily belong to it: and it would be highly inexpedient to clog the doctrine itself with any thing that is irrelevant or extraneous. It is sufficient for our purpose, if we can establish the position that *the death of Christ has such a connexion with the pardon of sin, as that God never does confer that blessing without having regard to it;* and further, that *it is the indispensable condition or consideration on account of which he does forgive the penitent, and that he does so in reference to its being an atoning and expiatory sacrifice.*

I lay the more stress upon this point, because the enemies of this doctrine direct their principal efforts against the particular notions which some Christians attach to the specific *quantum* of merit in the atoning sacrifice: and when they have, as they think, invalidated these, they imagine they have demolished the doctrine of the Atonement, as held in common by orthodox[3] Christians. They contrive, in this way, to shift the doctrine from its scriptural foundation, and place it on the peculiar notions of some classes of Christians. The true state of the contro-

[3] I use this word merely as a term of distinction, and not as *assuming* the correctness of their doctrines.

versy is this. *The adversaries of the doctrine assert, that nothing is wanted to make way for the pardon of sin, on the repentance of the offender, but the mere mercy of God: that the death of Jesus Christ is not an atoning and expiatory sacrifice, and has nothing to do with that pardon: and that God confers this blessing through Christ, as he does other ordinary favours.* It is on this point that we are at issue; for *we maintain, on the contrary, that God has thought fit to require, as a condition or consideration, in order to his pardoning sin, something distinct from the repentance of the offender; and that this is, the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is an atoning and expiatory sacrifice.* I may believe more than this respecting the merit of Christ's death. I may maintain, as I do, with our church, that it is "a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world." I may go further, which I do not,[4] and express

[4] "While it appears a most important scriptural truth, that something equivalent, in the eye of Divine Justice, to the punishment of the sinner, was absolutely necessary in order to his escape, I do not think there is any thing in the word of God, which warrants the interpretation that has been given by some of the friends of this doctrine, as if the suffering of Christ formed what they call *an exact equivalent*—neither less nor more—for the sins of all who shall be saved by his atone-

my belief that this death is an exact equivalent, in point of suffering, for the penalty of man's transgression: I may refine even upon this, and contend that there was, to the most minute numerical calculation, an equality between the sufferings of Christ and the punishment due to every sin, of every individual who shall be ultimately saved by Jesus Christ: and that if more or fewer than this number had been intended to be saved, a proportionably greater or less degree of suffering must have been endured: but no part of this

ment.—This sentiment seems derogatory to the infinite dignity of the sufferer, and the consequent infinite value of his sacrifice. The sufferings of the Son of God ought not to be brought into comparison, as a display of the divine righteousness, with even the eternal sufferings of millions of his creatures.—The idea of exact equivalent proceeds on the supposition, that the sufferings of Christ possessed just as much virtue as is sufficient for the salvation of all who shall be saved, whose precise proportion of punishment he is conceived to have borne, according to the guilt of each particular sin.—I know not how *you* may feel, my brethren; but *my* mind, I own, revolts from this sort of minutely calculating process on such a subject,—weighing out the precise quantum of suffering due to each sin of each individual who obtains forgiveness; and then, of course, limiting the sufficiency of the surety's mediation.—Such views have always appeared to me utterly inconsistent with the grandeur and majesty of this wonderful part of the divine administration."—*Wardlaw's* Discourses on the Socinian Controversy, p. 212.

is common ground, on which the orthodox Christian contends with the opponents of the doctrine of the atonement: it is peculiar to Christians among themselves, and the whole may be affirmed or denied, without in the least affecting the grand question, as resting on scriptural authority.

I cannot dismiss this subject, without lamenting the evil which has resulted from carrying points of doctrine beyond the clear and plain statements of the Holy Scriptures. There is a constant tendency in our nature to be "wise above what is written;" and to push arguments, and to draw inferences, which are altogether unauthorized by any fair construction of the word of God. The result has been pernicious, not only in the strife and debate which have so often afflicted the church of Christ, but in giving the greatest advantage to its common enemies. They have associated these extravagant notions with Christianity itself; and gloried in their victory over their feeble opponents, as though they had gained a triumph over truth itself. This has in no case, perhaps, been more remarkable, and more to be regretted, than in the attacks which have been made on the doctrine of the atonement. Many of its advocates have exceeded all the limits which the Scriptures and sober criticism pre-

scribe; and have spoken so incautiously of the Supreme Being in his character of Judge and Moral Governor, with the view of establishing the necessity of an exact equivalent, even to the minutest calculation, being given to his violated laws, as apparently to divest him of love and mercy; and to transform him into a being not only of inflexible justice, but of inexorable wrath, without feeling the least relentings of compassion towards the returning prodigal. These representations have been insidiously identified with the doctrine of the atonement, and exhibited as belonging to its very essence: and when its adversaries have established the doctrine of the divine goodness and compassion, (a doctrine which no one calls in question,) they seem to think that they have given a fatal blow to the doctrine of the atonement, and that little else remains than to enjoy the honours of a triumph. But when this doctrine is placed on its plain scriptural ground, and stripped of the ill-judged appendages with which some of its injudicious friends had incumbered it, it remains untouched by such arguments, and will retain its place till truth itself meets with a victorious adversary.

Having thus briefly stated what appears to me to be the scriptural doctrine of the Atonement,

and made these few preliminary remarks, I intend to proceed in the following order; I shall endeavour

I. To REMOVE THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTIONS BROUGHT AGAINST THE DOCTRINE;

II. To ESTABLISH IT ON THE AUTHORITY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES; and

III. To SHOW ITS CONSISTENCY WITH REASON AND THE FITNESS OF THINGS.

SECTION II.

Answer to Objections.

I shall now proceed TO REMOVE THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTIONS WHICH ARE BROUGHT AGAINST THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT AS THUS STATED; and these, I think, may be arranged under the following heads. It is alleged, 1. *That both the truth and importance of this doctrine may be denied, from certain supposed omissions to mention it in the New Testament.* 2. *That there is no necessity in the case, to require it; and that it is directly opposed to the attributes and perfections of the divine nature.* 3. *That it is in direct contradiction to many plain passages of the Holy Scriptures.* And lastly, *That it is founded on an unauthorized assumption of the expiatory and vicarious nature of sacrifices.* Let us attend to each of these OBJECTIONS IN THEIR ORDER.

CHAPTER I.

Answer to Objections against the Doctrine of the Atonement, on the alleged ground that it is not mentioned in certain parts of the New Testament, where, if it were a doctrine of Scripture, we might expect to find it.

IT is alleged that THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS DOCTRINE, AND EVEN ITS TRUTH, MAY BE DENIED, FROM CERTAIN SUPPOSED OMISSIONS TO MENTION IT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

1. It is said that "our Lord was silent respecting this doctrine on those occasions when it was most natural for him to have taught it, if it had been a doctrine of truth; as for instance, when he took such pains to convince his disciples of the necessity of his dying, if the making of satisfaction or an atonement for the sins of the world had rendered that death necessary, he would have stated this; and yet he passed it over in total silence."[1]

[1] The supposed silence of some parts of the New Testament on particular doctrines has often been alleged by Socinians as

(1.) In answer to this, we reply, *first*, That though it should be admitted that Christ did

an argument against either the truth, or, if true, the importance of such doctrines. Bishop Horsley, in his "Letters in reply to Dr. Priestley," meets this objection in the following manner. "I allow, that 'there is nothing that can be called an *account* of the divine nature of Christ, in the gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, or St. Luke.' But every one of the gospels abounds with passages, in which it is so evidently implied, that no room is left to doubt, that the four evangelists had but one opinion upon the subject. I cannot admit your position, that 'each of the gospels was intended to be a sufficient instruction in the fundamental principles of the doctrines of Christianity.' Nothing seems to have been less the intention of any of the evangelists, than to compose a system of fundamental principles. Instruction in fundamentals, in that age, was orally delivered. The general design of the evangelists seems to have been nothing more, than to deliver in writing a simple, unembellished narrative of our Lord's principal miracles; to record the occurrences and actions of his life, which went immediately to the accomplishment of the ancient prophecies, or to the execution of the scheme of man's redemption; and to register the most interesting maxims of religion and morality which were contained in his discourses. The principles of the Christian religion are to be collected neither from a single gospel, nor all the four gospels; nor from the four gospels, with the acts and the epistles; but from the whole code of revelation, consisting of the canonical books of the Old and New Testament: and for any article of faith, the authority of a single writer, where it is express and unequivocal, is sufficient. Had St. Paul related to you what he saw in the third heaven, I hope, Sir, you would have given him implicit credit, although

always pass over the subject in silence, and especially on the occasion here alluded to, yet no conclusion against this doctrine can thence be inferred, unless it can be shown that our Lord had himself undertaken to teach his disciples all the great truths of religion, and that their minds were sufficiently prepared to receive them. But the direct contrary of this is stated by Christ himself. Just before his separation from them, he said: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth."[2]

Should it be difficult for us to account for the silence of Scripture on particular truths, there may still be sufficient reasons for it, which we cannot discover; nor ought it to be thought extraordinary that man, with his short line of intellect, cannot fathom the abyss of God's counsels. What perplexity has it not caused among wise and learned men to account for the slow and gradual developement of the purposes of divine mercy to mankind, in various dark and tedious dispensations of religion, rather than in the sud-

the truth of the narrative must have rested on his single testimony." pp. 284, 285.

[2] John xvi. 12, 13.

den rising of "the Sun of Righteousness" on our miserable world, and at once bringing "life and immortality to light." All that we can say to this—what must be said on ten thousand other occasions—is, "Even so, Father! for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

(2.) But we have a *second* reply to the objection before us. The alleged silence of our Lord is only imaginary: he did not pass over the subject of the Atonement in silence; nor did he neglect to speak of it, when conversing with his disciples on his approaching death. What was the topic to which he directed their chief attention at the last supper, just before his "agony and bloody sweat?" In presenting them with the wine as the memorial of his "precious blood-shedding," he says, "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins."[3] Here the allusion is direct to the well-understood blood of the atonement, under the Mosaic dispensation, and to the consequent remission of sin in virtue of that atonement. Its meaning must have been as obvious to a reflecting Jew, as that of John the Baptist, when he exclaimed, on the first public

[3] Matt. xxvi. 28. Mark xiv. 24.

appearance of Christ, (and it is not undeserving of remark, that the publication of the doctrine of the Atonement of Christ was cotemporaneous with the commencement of his mission,) "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."[4] With these passages in the gospel before us, as furnishing the right canon of interpretation where the allusion is somewhat less marked, we can have no difficulty in putting the right construction on other expressions, which our Lord frequently let drop in reference to the object of his approaching death; as when he said, "The Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many:"[5] "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life:"[6] "I am the good Shepherd—the good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep:"[7] "Greater love hath no man than than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends:"[8] and finally, "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."[9] Nay, so constantly had our Lord set before his disciples the necessity of his death, as an atoning sacrifice, and as the antitype

[4] John i. 29. [5] Matt. xx. 26. Mark x. 45.
[6] John iii. 14, 15. [7] John x. 11. [8] John xv. 13.
[9] John vi. 51.

of the various sacrifices of the Jews, that, on his resurrection from the dead, he upbraided them for their ignorance on so plain a point, and said, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: *ought* not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"[1] And in order that this doctrine might be clearly understood, he wrought one of his last miracles, for "*he opened their understanding* that they might understand the Scriptures; and said unto them, thus it is written, and thus *it behoved Christ to suffer,* and to rise from the dead the third day; and that *repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name.*"[2]

2. A similar objection, and equally unfounded, is made against this doctrine, from the supposed silence of the disciples of our Lord, in their sermons, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. We are told that the advocates of this doctrine think it necessary when preaching to unconverted sinners, to say a great deal about the vindictive justice of God; and the utter impossibility of his saving them on any ground, but the complete satisfaction made by Christ to divine justice for all their sins. "Had the apostles maintained the

[1] Luke xxiv. 25, 26. [2] Luke xxiv. 45—47.

same views (we are told) it is reasonable to suppose that they would have insisted upon the same points when preaching to unconverted sinners; yet in all their discourses which we have an account of in the book of the Acts, we do not find that they have said one word upon the subject."

Now, if we were to grant that this doctrine is no where to be found in the discourses of the apostles, yet if it can be proved from any part of God's word, the doctrine must be true. The silence of one part of Scripture on any subject, cannot be reasonably objected against a doctrine if it be maintained in another; and we do find in point of fact, that very important truths are sometimes made to rest on one or two passages of the Holy Scriptures. Take as an instance the union of the office of priest and king in Jesus Christ, on which the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews lays great stress, as the foundation of the highest privileges and hopes of a Christian; and yet the apostle rests the whole weight of his argument on a single historical fact, and a solitary statement in the book of Psalms. Melchizedek was a type of the royal and priestly office of Christ. He was intended to prefigure all that was great in Him that was to be "the Author of eternal salvation unto them that believe," com-

bined with all that was compassionate in the "high-priest, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities;" and yet this union of office, where so much is involved, is founded upon a singular character, who is mentioned but twice in all the Old Testament. This fact is sufficient to show that we are not always to be guided in our belief of either the truth or importance of a doctrine, by the small number of times, or the fewness of the books, in which it is mentioned. There may be abundant reasons for the fact which we cannot understand; and it ought not to shake our confidence as to the truth of any thing plainly revealed, because it is not mentioned in every book of the Holy Scriptures.

In the case, however, before us, if the objection were founded upon fact, it would be easy to assign many satisfactory reasons for the omission. In the sermons referred to in the Acts, it is possible that the apostles might be treating on subjects, which did not *naturally lead* to this doctrine; and as they do not profess in any of their sermons to give a complete system of divinity, nor was there any concert made among them that their sermons taken together, should form such a system, we might account for this silence, if it existed, without having recourse to the supposi-

tion that the apostles did not maintain the doctrine in question. It is well known that the first step of the apostles was to establish the *truth* of the Christian religion: and this they did by continually adverting to the wonderful and incontrovertibly established fact of our Lord's resurrection; and it will be seen, by a reference to the accounts given of their discourses, that this was the main point on which they insisted. It must be remarked, also, that almost all the discourses which are mentioned were preached by St. Paul and St. Peter, and that it is from their *epistles* that we collect most abundant proofs of their holding the doctrine in question; and we cannot, with the least show of reason, suppose that these holy apostles *preached* one doctrine and *wrote* another. If they believed it, when they sent their epistles, they did so, when they delivered their sermons. But there is an *assumption* in the argument which is not correct. It seems to be supposed that the book, called the Acts of the Apostles, consists chiefly of *sermons*, or at least, that there are a great many in it. We are indeed told of many sermons that were preached; but we have no account of more than four or five discourses, if we except apologies and defences, and those very short, in the whole of the Acts; and therefore it need not be greatly

wondered if this doctrine had been passed over in silence.

But after all, the fact is, *there is no such omission:* we conceive the doctrine to be clearly implied, if not systematically laid down in this book, and we adduce many passages from it, in proof of this. The whole discourse of Philip with the Ethiopian Eunuch, as recorded in the eighth chapter, appears to have been on the Atonement. St. Peter, in his defence before the rulers of the Jews, had this doctrine in view when he said, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."[3] The same may be asserted of his discourse before Cornelius and his friends, in which he says, "To him give all the prophets witness that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."[4] On another occasion, when at Antioch, he said, "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."[5] And if there were no other passage in this book but the address of St. Paul to the elders of the

[3] Acts iv. 12. [4] x. 43. [5] xiii. 38, 39.

church of Ephesus, it would be sufficient to establish both the truth and the importance of this doctrine. "Feed," says this apostle, "the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."[6] Hence I conclude, that the objection against this doctrine, founded on the supposed silence of our Lord upon it, in the Gospels, and the apostles in the Acts, has no show of truth in it: for whatever construction our opponents may put upon these numerous passages, they are claimed by the advocates of this doctrine, and will be as confidently brought into the field of argument in support of it, as any contained in the Holy Scriptures.

CHAPTER II.

Answer to Objections against the Doctrine of the Atonement, on the alleged ground that it is unnecessary, and is opposed to the Attributes and Perfections of the Divine Nature.

Having endeavoured to invalidate this doctrine by the supposed silence of Christ and his disciples respecting it, its adversaries next endeavour to set it aside by alleging, *That there is no*

[6] Acts xx. 28.

necessity in the case to require it; and that it is in direct opposition to the acknowledged attributes and perfections of the Divine Being.

1. "Satisfaction, or an atonement for sin, it is said, implies an injury received by him who requires it, and a capability of receiving compensation; but God is no more capable of receiving injury, than he is of doing injury, or than he is of receiving benefit."

(1.) To this we reply, that the premises from which this conclusion is drawn are inadmissible. They confound the important distinction between *person and office.* An injury may be done to a legislator or governor, in his *official* capacity, which does not affect him in his *private* character; and therefore, though it should be granted that personal satisfaction implies personal injury, and that as no injury is done by sin to the Supreme Being, in his own nature, he may not demand an Atonement to repair a breach of this kind, yet *as the Supreme Governor and Legislator of the world,* whose office it is to provide for the well-being of all his subjects, and as their *head and representative,* in whom all their interests in time and eternity are concentrated, he may receive the greatest injury by the rebellion

of any part of his subjects; and it is not contrary to reason to suppose, that he may demand such satisfaction for the evil as may repair the breach committed on his moral government.

(2.) The argument moreover goes to confound all distinction, as far as respects the dealings of divine Providence with different characters, between good and evil; for it is as true that "our *goodness* extendeth not unto him," as that our *sins* cannot affect him: and therefore, as it respects himself, virtue and vice are matters of equal indifference. It was long ago asked by Elihu, "If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man, as thou art, and thy righteousness may profit the son of man;"[1] and so have infidels often asked and answered; and though the question is exceedingly proper when applied to the presumptuous individual, who imagines that he can lay the Almighty under an obligation by his virtues, or affect his happiness by his vices, yet nothing can be more irrelevant, when referred to the notice which it becomes the Sovereign Ruler of the

[1] Job xxxv. 6—8.

world to take of the conduct of his subjects. It has long been the opinion of unbelievers, that "God will neither do good, neither will he do evil," and the argument before us favours that notion; but let Christians beware of admitting a maxim which virtually supersedes natural as well as revealed religion.

(3.) If this argument against the Atonement were followed up to all its consequences, we should be shocked at the result. God is not only the ruler of this lower world, but he has under his dominion unnumbered beings in heaven, and probably in countless other regions. He has placed these myriads of his subjects in various degrees of subordination; from the cherubim which surround his throne, down through all the principalities and powers of heaven, to the humble inhabitants of inferior worlds, and of our earth. The happiness and well being of all these depend on their obedience to the constituted order of things, and God is the great Conservator of all their present and future interests. If a single act of rebellion were to take place in any part of these dominions, and remain unpunished, it might, for ought we know, extend to other parts, and finally disorganize his whole dominion, and produce universal confusion and

unhappiness; and yet, because the Supreme Governor himself, in this general subversion of his authority and rebellion of his subjects, would receive, according to the argument before us, no personal injury,—because his perfections would be untouched, his glory untarnished, and his felicity unimpaired, he could not, with reason, demand any satisfaction at the hands of the first author of this universal confusion and misery! To such an absurdity would the reasoning which we are considering necessarily lead us!

2. *It is further objected against this doctrine, that it stands opposed to the infinite goodness and mercy of the Supreme Being.* "If God be not of a wrathful, vindictive, revengeful nature, but the Father of mercies, good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all his works, ever ready to forgive;—in a word, if he be love, satisfaction, or an atonement for sins could never be necessary to *induce* him to be merciful to his creatures, or disposed to forgive his offending offspring. On the other hand, supposing an Atonement for sin necessary to render him merciful and gracious to sinners, implies a denial, that mercy and grace are essential to his nature, and greatly detracts from the freeness of divine mercy and favour."

(1.) To this we reply, that all this may be granted, without in the least impeaching the doctrine of the Atonement. It does not imply that there are any qualities in the divine nature contrary to the fullest display of his grace and mercy; or that any thing was wanting to *induce* God to be favourable to sinners. On the contrary, we maintain that it involves the strongest possible proof of the existence of these qualities in the Divine Nature, and furnishes the most satisfactory evidence that every blessing of time and eternity may be reasonably expected by his people from "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:" "for," as the apostle reasons, "if God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not, with him, freely give us all things?"[2] It is not a little singular that the fact which is here assigned as the strongest possible evidence of the love of God to man, should be selected as that which, in the opinion of the adversaries of the Atonement, involves the direct contrary: and it certainly is most unfortunate for their argument, that the most affecting descriptions which are given of the compassion of God towards our miserable world, stand in connexion with passages of the New Testament, which have a direct or implied re-

[2] Rom. viii. 32.

ference to the atoning sacrifice. "Scarcely," argues the apostle, "for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man, some will even dare to die; *but God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*"[3] "*In this was manifested the love of God toward* us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. *Herein is love,* not that we loved God, but *that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*"[4] In reference to this proof of the divine love to man, the apostles abound in such expressions as the following: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation, and a good hope through grace. Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant."[5] These and similar passages make it evident, that the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, is the brightest display that ever has or can be

[3] Rom. v. 7—9. [4] 1 Joh. iv. 9, 10.
[5] 2 Cor. i. 3. 2 Thess. ii. 16. Heb. xiii. 20.

made of the love and compassion of our heavenly Father to mankind; and it is most extraordinary that this fact should be adduced as an evidence that he is "wrathful and vindictive," and has no delight in the exercise of mercy.

(2.) It is indeed true in fact, and a leading principle in the doctrine of the Atonement, that God has thought fit to "require for sin," and to refuse the pardon of it, except on the ground of his holy law and righteous government being honoured by exacting the penalty of transgression from the person of the sinner's surety. But it is not a correct conclusion from this fact, that this doctrine involves any thing contrary to the love of God to man. The argument of our opponents proceeds upon a twofold error: first, in confounding two things which are altogether distinct; and secondly, in assuming a fact which can never be conceded.

[1. It confounds, in the first place, the *sentiment* of love, with the *expression* of it. The former may, and often does exist, where there is no suitable medium of manifesting it: no *inducement* is wanted, but a *conveyance*. When Absalom had violated the law of God and man in murdering his brother Amnon, he did not, by

that act, annihilate the love of his father, but he rendered it most difficult for his father to manifest his affection: for he was a judge as well as a parent. Hence the sacred historian informs us, that "the soul of King David longed to go forth unto Absalom;" but he was constrained to suppress this emotion by a sense of what was due to the violated laws of his kingdom; and therefore he could not permit his son to approach his presence. A somewhat similar instance of this conflict between paternal feeling and judicial propriety is recorded respecting Zaleucas, the lawgiver of the Locrians, who, according to a law of his own enacting, had subjected the adulterer to the penalty of losing his eyes. His own son was the first who was convicted of the offence: and the compromise between fatherly affection and official duty was effected by sharing the penalty with his son, and each submitting to the privation of an eye.

It is a mistake then to suppose, that our doctrine imputes to God *a want of motive, to induce* him to pardon sin. This is by no means the case. On the contrary, it rests on the fact of his infinite compassion. It assumes, as its first principle, that God, from the purest love, desired reconciliation with man; and adduces,

as the strongest evidence of this, his providing an atoning sacrifice, that he might, at the same time, save both the sinners and the honour of his own law; for "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." He wanted, therefore, no *inducement* to save sinners, but a *medium*, through which those intentions of mercy might be consistently manifested; and we contend that the atoning sacrifice was such a medium.

It is indeed alleged by our opponents, that the doctrine of conveying mercy to mankind, through the *medium* of Jesus Christ, is precisely that for which they contend; and that, had the advocates of the Atonement satisfied themselves with such a representation of their doctrine, they would have had none to dispute the point with them. But this is an agreement of words, not of facts. Socinians speak of Christ's mission generally, as the medium through which God has made known to man the placability of his nature, and his readiness to forgive. He might have done so, consistently with their notions, through the medium of an angel, or in a thousand other different ways. But this is not *our* doctrine. We contend that the medium was

special, and *necessarily* limited to the atoning sacrifice which Christ made upon the cross; and that according to our *interpretation of Scripture,* and *the constitution of things under which divine wisdom has placed man,* the mercy of God could have been manifested in no other way; it was the only channel through which it could flow—the only medium by which it could be conveyed. But this does not suppose that the atoning sacrifice was necessary to *excite* the divine benevolence, but only to render the *exercise* of it practicable; it was not the *first cause* of his love, but the *means* of displaying it, and, according to the scriptural account, the *only* means by which, consistently with what we may call a moral necessity, he could display it.

(2.) But the objection, in the next place, proceeds on an *assumption* which can by no means be admitted. It supposes that the objector understands all that is involved in the love and mercy of God to man, or at least that he can distinctly point out all that is incompatible with it. Now, we deny that he is competent to such a task, and that there are ten thousand things which the history of the world records, and which are still continually taking place, which far exceed his powers to reconcile with his no-

tions of the divine goodness. What will he say, on his assumption, to the introduction of sin and suffering into the world? to the desolations which have risen from war, pestilence, and famine? to the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah? to the destruction of the world by the deluge? to the havoc and ruin of volcanoes, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes? to the general predominance of vice over virtue? to the prosperity of the wicked, and the afflictions of the righteous? to the introduction of a revelation from God, bringing life and immortality to light, at so late a period of the world? to its present partial extension amongst mankind, and its comparative inefficiency, where it has been made known? to the general prevalence of idolatry, and its consequent depravity, misery, and cruelty? to the subjugation of a vast mass of the world to the oppression of tyrants? and to the long continued and widely extended degradation and wretchedness of slavery? In what way are these, and a thousand other things to be reconciled with our ideas of a being of infinite compassion, who possesses inexhaustible resources of wisdom and power to accomplish all the purposes of his grace and mercy to man? Doubtless all of them are parts of one grand plan to promote the greatest general good of his creatures; but who

will undertake to make the matter plain to sense and reason? who can give any other answer, than "Even so father, for so it hath seemed good in thy sight!" Every thing, both in the natural and moral government of God leads us to exclaim, "O the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

These observations are thrown out to show that, though there should be something in the doctrine of the Atonement not easily reconcileable with our accustomed ideas of the divine benevolence, yet this furnishes no reasonable ground of objection against it, if it be a matter of plain revelation, as these difficulties are only analogous to others which are perpetually occurring in the investigation of the infinitely wise and benevolent purposes of God in reference to man. All abstract reasonings of what it is right and proper for God to do, must have in them considerable uncertainty, from the fact of their being founded on premises which surpass the comprehension of man; and when we adduce such reasonings against such plain and numerous passages of scripture, as will hereafter be brought in support of this doctrine, we act in as little consistency with sound judgment as with Christian humility.

(3.) But I add, finally, that the whole of this objection proceeds on *a mistaken notion of the nature of the Divine Government*. It supposes that mercy to an offender may be exercised independently of the principles and regulations upon which that government professes to be founded: and that, after establishing an order of things subject to rules and motives, (that is, to laws which are sanctioned by rewards and punishments,) the legislator is at liberty at any time to depart from that system, and overturn, at once, all that he had previously ordained as essential to the very existence of his government. If the system had been founded on arbitrary power, then it might have been upheld by the attribute of Omnipotence, and no defection of man from his allegiance could frustrate the original intention of God to sustain his authority by the exercise of irresistible might. Or, if it had been a government of mercy, then judgment and justice could have had no place in it, and vice and virtue, in the subjects of it, would have been equally unimportant. But it is a government neither of absolute power, nor of indiscriminate mercy: but it is a *moral* government, founded upon equitable laws, and enforced by motives addressed both to our hopes and our fears; and having, for its sanctions, eternal happiness or

misery. No exercise, therefore, either of power or mercy, which is incompatible with this order of things, can possibly be admitted into this system. Mercy and power are, indeed, both displayed, but in such a way as exactly to accord with the original principle of the system, and to promote its fundamental design of operating by rewards and punishments. Though it may not, therefore, be necessary that an atonement should be made for the purpose of *inducing* the Supreme Governor to exercise mercy towards offenders, it may, notwithstanding, be indispensably requisite in order for his *displaying* that mercy, consistently with the moral government, which he has established among men. Mercy must be exercised, therefore, in such a way as to leave all the motives for obedience unimpared and untouched. The individual must never have it to say, "I have been pardoned at the expense of the whole system of government which God had previously ordained in the world, and so as entirely to supersede the sanctions of, and therefore to annihilate, future happiness and misery, as offering motives either to hope or fear."

I cannot dismiss this subject without animadverting on the gross impropriety with which So-

cinians have often treated the opinions of those who maintain the doctrine of the Atonement. They represent them as chargeable with transforming the Supreme Being into a cruel and merciless tyrant. They speak of the doctrine as "supposing the divine justice to be a vindictive, revengeful principle, ever thirsting for blood, and after plunging its vengeful sword in the soul of the innocent, it still pursues multitudes of the guilty, whose punishments he bore, and exacts a second payment of the debts which the innocent victim paid with his own blood; and relentlessly consigning them to everlasting perdition, because they cannot satisfy its demands, which were all satisfied by his suffering in their stead;" and much more to the same purpose. Now, to say nothing of the bad taste of such charges, and the inconsistency of such declamation with superior pretensions to cool and dispassionate argumentations, one might appeal to the candour of such writers, and ask whether they do not know that such accusations are unfounded? Many of them did themselves once hold the doctrine, which they now load with such monstrous charges: did *they* then entertain such ideas of the character of the Supreme Being? If they did, they must have acted with great insincerity, when they often proclaimed, both in public

and in private, that "God is love," and styled him "the God of all consolation," "the Father of mercies," "rich in mercy to all that call upon him." If they did not, then they cannot stand acquitted of having disingenuously and knowingly misrepresented a doctrine, which rejects with horror such imputations, and which claims for its very foundation the love and mercy of God to man.

It is true, indeed, that many advocates for this doctrine have said much on the justice and truth and holiness of the divine Being, as precluding any hope of reconciliation with him, without an atoning sacrifice; and have sometimes represented the wrath of God against sin as burning with fury, and as only to be averted by fleeing for refuge to Jesus Christ, as the hope set before them; and some have probably used unguarded language on this awful subject: but still they are not to be utterly condemned for speaking even in strong terms upon it, till it can be shown that there is nothing in the scriptures themselves which gives countenance to such descriptions. If those, who so strongly animadvert on this language, would take the trouble of consulting such passages of scripture as are referred to in a concordance under the words "anger, wrath, indignation, fury, vengeance," &c. they would find that

God is not always represented in the character in which they affect exclusively to consider him; but that even the God who is love, is sometimes exhibited as "a consuming fire." They will contend indeed, and that justly, that these representations of the Deity are reconcileable with those of an opposite character, and are to be referred rather to the results and final issue of things, than to the attributes of a Being who is totally divested of all human passions, and is as incapable of love as he is of hatred, in the strict application of these terms. But still these representations of God are found in the scriptures, and do not constitute any valid objection against them, because they admit of a rational explanation. For the same reason, the use of similar terms, by any of the advocates of the Atonement, ought not to be adduced in prejudice of their doctrine, unless it can be shown that they admit of no satisfactory explanation, and are altogether irreconcileable with just ideas of the divine perfections. Now certainly the persons in question do attempt such a reconciliation. They maintain, with as much zeal as their opponents do, that "God is love," and they reject, with as much abhorrence, every imputation on their doctrine, which would detract from that essential quality of the best of Beings. A Satisfactionist, as he

has been sometimes called, would contend against a Socinian that his exhibition of the divine character and government are as compatible with the infinite love and mercy, the immutability and sovereignty of God, notwithstanding the use he makes of certain scriptural terms, which seem to be of a contrary nature, as the latter would contend with an infidel that the same terms are reconcileable with his notions of the placability of the Divine Being, and his boundless benevolence.

No apology, I trust, need be offered for the length to which these remarks on the character of the Divine Being have been extended, if they have set that important subject in its true light, and exonerated the doctrine of the Atonement from those unjust charges which have been alleged against it, as being opposed to the boundless grace and mercy of God to man. I will now proceed to other objections.

3. "It may be questioned," it is said, "whether there could be any such thing as God's pardoning sin, if no sinner be exempted from punishment, but on the ground of a substitute having first suffered all the punishment due to him in his stead, any more than an insolvent man could be

said to have all his debts forgiven by his creditors, who would not have set him at liberty at all, had they not first received the full amount of what he owed them at the hands of his surety."

The *argument* in this objection is at variance with the *case* on which it is founded. In the former, sin is supposed to be a *crime*, which involves moral character, and deserves punishment; in the latter, it is considered merely as a *debt*, which neither implies personal demerit, nor necessarily incurs a penalty. For though, in one sense, sin may be called a debt, because we owe obedience to God as our Creator and Governor, and therefore every failure, under this view of it, is a debt; yet the proper representation of man's state is that of a guilty criminal before his judge, who cannot dispense with the execution of the threatened penalty, without a manifest injury to his own character and government; which is a widely different case from that of a debtor and creditor. Allowing it to be true that, in *pecuniary transactions*, whenever a debtor satisfies his creditors, (no matter by what means,) he may claim liberation as a matter of *right*, and not of *favour;* yet this reasoning will not apply against a lawgiver and judge. Here personal character is involved; and if the criminal should be ex-

empted from punishment, (no matter for what reason,) inasmuch as he has been dealt with infinitely more favourably than he deserved, it will not surely be denied that he has been pardoned, and that his pardon ought to be viewed as an act of grace or favour. The Atonement is considered as a necessary expedient to support the dignity and authority of the divine government, so that "God may be just, while he is the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Now supposing a king, out of compassion to a detachment of his army, who had turned their arms against him, should devise such an expedient as might maintain unimpaired his authority, and satisfy the claims of justice, (say by accepting the voluntary offer of his only son to submit to a certain punishment, in the place of the rebels,) and yet permit him to receive into favour again those who were willing to return to their allegiance—would any object against this expedient as detracting from the freeness of the pardon, or adduce it as an argument that no pardon had been granted? Surely not. The fact would rather be considered as the strongest possible proof of his love; and so far from diminishing the obligation of the pardon, would enhance it tenfold.

4. Nearly allied to the former objection is the

following. "If Christ made full satisfaction (or an Atonement) for the sins of the whole world, by bearing the wrath of God which was due to all mankind, how can it be right for any sinner to be punished in his own person, justice having received its full demands? But as we have the fullest proof that all impenitents will be subjected to personal punishment according to their ranks, (guilt,) it follows that another has not borne all their punishment for them."

The error of this objection arises from confounding a *sufficient* with an *efficient* cause; and satisfaction in a case of *debt*, with one in a case of *crime*. The latter of these mistakes has just been noticed. With regard to the former we may observe that, allowing the Atonement of Christ to have made a satisfaction *sufficient* for the sins of the whole world, if they were to repent and believe in him; yet it does not follow that the whole world must needs be brought to repentance, faith, and salvation; and still less that they shall partake of the latter without the former. Whatever connexion there may be, in right, between the satisfaction of a *creditor*, and the immediate release of a *debtor*, this connexion does not extend to what relates to *crimes*. All the connexion there is in this case arises from the

covenant of promise, under which the Saviour laid down his life; which covenant, though it makes provision for repentance and forgiveness, makes none for forgiveness without repentance.

The sacrifices under the Mosaic law were of no account, but to "the comers thereunto."[6] If, on the great day of Atonement, the regulations as laid down by the lawgiver[7] had been neglected, the benefit of it could not have been received. If any of the tribes of Israel, instead of "afflicting their souls," and appearing before their God, had absented themselves, and been employed in offering sacrifices to idols, the benefits of the Atonement, whatever might have been its *sufficiency*, would not have been extended to them. This was actually the case with the ten tribes when they separated themselves from the worship of God. And when, after they were carried into captivity, Hezekiah had respect to the remnant that was left, "commanding that the burnt-offering and sin-offering should be made for *all Israel*," it was not designed that they should partake of its benefits, except *as coming up to Jerusalem to worship*. Hence, letters and messengers were sent into all their coasts, to invite them to do so.[8]

[6] Heb. x. 1. [7] Levit. xvi. 29—34.
[8] 2 Chron. xxix. xxx.

Now, if the scoffers of Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun, who "laughed these messengers to scorn, and mocked them," had afterwards pleaded the injustice of being punished for their sins, inasmuch as the Atonement was made for *all Israel*, what would have been thought of the justice of their plea? Yet their claim would have been equally as well grounded as that of impenitent unbelievers, who refuse submission to the terms on which the benefits of the atoning sacrifice are offered, to be exempted from the punishment of their sins, on the principle of justice, from the vicarious sacrifice of Christ.

5. It is again alleged, that "Justice consists in doing that which is right; and both reason and scripture proclaim that it cannot be right to impute guilt to an innocent person."

No one disputes that "justice consists in doing what is right;" and yet the conclusion which Socinians draw from this truism, cannot be admitted without some limitation and explanation. If it be meant that the evil actions of a wicked man cannot become the evil actions of a good man, and that the demerit inherent in these actions can never be transferred from the guilty so as to become the inherent demerit of the innocent, this

is so obvious that no rational being for a moment disputes it. The criminality of sin can never pass over from the vicious to the virtuous; nor do characters ever appear in the eyes of God different from what they really are. But if it be meant, as it must be, that "both reason and scripture proclaim" the injustice of *so* imputing the guilt of the wicked to the innocent, as that the latter should ever *bear* any of the penal effects of the former, this we deny, and think we can disprove. Right reason can never be in opposition to the actual dealings of divine Providence with man; for "the Judge of all the earth must do right." Now, in innumerable cases, both natural and providential, the punishment of the guilty, either in part or in whole, is transferred to the innocent, and they are dealt with as though they were the actual transgressors. Man is so constituted as to be unable to live out of society; and such is the condition of this law of our nature, that the unoffending must often necessarily suffer for the crimes of the wicked. A child inherits the enfeebled and diseased constitution of a profligate parent. Infants, "who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," are subject to his penalty, and "death has passed upon" them as well as upon him. The three sore judgments of God upon wicked nations,

"the sword, and pestilence, and famine," sweep away innocent children as well as their criminal parents. The plagues and deaths, which Pharaoh's hardness of heart and opposition to God provoked, fell upon the whole nation of the Egyptians as well as on the king. The earth, that punished the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, "swallowed up" also their wives and their children. The fire and brimstone that destroyed the men of Sodom and Gomorrah consumed those also who could not have had any share in their abominations: and the deluge, which swept away the infidel inhabitants of the old world, buried in the same watery grave their new-born infants. Now, these are facts which meet the senses, and admit of no evasion. Every day presents us with undeniable instances of a just and righteous Governor, so imputing guilt to innocent persons as to inflict on the latter an equal portion of suffering with the former. And what we daily witness in the administration of divine Providence, we see established as a rule of conduct in divine Revelation: "I will visit," says the lawgiver in the Decalogue, "the sins of the fathers upon their children to the third and fourth generation;" and the prophet Jeremiah puts the true construction on this law, when he records the historical fact, and says, "our fathers

have sinned, and are not, and we have borne their iniquities."[9] Our blessed Lord also grounded his dreadful doom of Jerusalem on the same principle, when he said "upon you shall come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."[1] And to what else can we ascribe the present dispersion of the Jews, and their long-protracted miseries, but to the impious prayer of their forefathers, "His blood be upon us and on our children?" Hence it is most manifest, both from the common course of divine Providence, and the rule of conduct laid down in the holy scriptures, that upon the innocent the guilt of the wicked is often so imputed and entailed as that the effects of it are felt in the fullest extent. Now, however difficult it may be to account for the equity and justice of such a mode of procedure, we cannot deny its existence; and the very fact of its existence is a proof that it is both just and right; for otherwise, "how should God judge the world? The Judge of all the earth must do right." So that, so far are "reason and scripture from proclaiming the injustice of imputing, in a certain way, guilt upon the innocent," we find both of them concur in the fact, that the

[9] Lamentations v. 7 [1] Matt. xxiii. 35.

unoffending often are visited for the transgressions of the wicked.

Now to apply this to the case before us. There can be no doubt of the complete innocence of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is acknowledged by all to be "holy and harmless, and separate from sinners." "He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:" and yet it was predicted of him that "he should bear our iniquities; that God should lay upon him the iniquity of us all; that the chastisement of our peace should be upon him, and that by his stripes we should be healed:"[2] and the sacred history records that he did "suffer *for our sins*, the *just for the unjust*, that he might bring us unto God."[3] This is the scriptural account of the matter, and it has its analogy in the course of divine Providence. Now, if there be any thing in it difficult to be understood, or apparently contrary to reason, Socinians, who appeal on this subject both to "reason and scripture," are as much required as we are, to reconcile the fact with justice and equity.

We will, however, admit that the analogy between the innocent bearing the guilt of others, in

[2] Isaiah liii. [3] 1 Pet. iii. 18.

the course of divine Providence, does not hold in every point with Jesus Christ "suffering the just for the unjust." Christ was innocent to an extent that can be asserted of no merely human being; nor was he connected with us by the customary ties which unite man with man. But these differences strengthen our case, and make it still more evident that the sins of others were imputed to him; and that it is consonant with justice that they should be so. Taking the fact that the most innocent and holy of beings was also the greatest of sufferers—that the immaculate Saviour was emphatically "the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,"—and that these sufferings were inflicted by the hand of God, and that it "pleased the Father to bruise him," we ask, in what way are these facts to be accounted for? Here we have innocence suffering, and that by God's appointment: shall we say that this was unjust? Those who assert this, charge injustice upon God: those who deny it, acknowledge that innocence may justly suffer. But all suffering is penal—it is the wages of sin—and the conclusion is unavoidable, that, in the case of Christ's sufferings, the sins of others must have been imputed.

It may be thought, however, after all, to be a hard case—though doubtless reconcileable with

strict justice, or the case could not have existed—that any should bear the penalty of a crime, which he had no share in committing; and some may think that it is an unhappy condition of our nature to be thus responsible for others' transgressions. In the case however before us this hardship does not exist. Christ is not connected with man by the law of necessity, but of covenant and agreement. He *voluntarily* undertook a cause, which he might have declined without any impeachment of his goodness, or diminution of his happiness. And this fact gives an entirely new aspect to the case. He *gratuitously* became man's surety. He undertook, of his own free will, to "redeem us from the curse of the law;" and as this could not be done without "becoming a curse for us," the sufferings were self-induced; and though the penalty was inflicted on a perfectly innocent being, there was no injustice in the case, nor the least ground of complaint in imputing guilt to the innocent.

6. It is further objected, that "a vicarious sacrifice strikes at the foundation of the great love and rich mercy of the Deity, in exhibiting free salvation to a guilty world."

From this objection we are doubtless to infer,

that if any thing be made an indispensable condition in the pardoning of sin, it destroys the freeness of it, and is incompatible with the love and mercy of God to man: for the objection does not apply *only* to the necessity of a vicarious sacrifice, but of every thing which would stop the free current of it to "a guilty world." This love and mercy, it seems, must be free, unfettered, and unconditional, or they lose their character, and are annihilated. Now, if this objection apply against our system, it subverts also that of Socinians. *They* suppose that this salvation is not so free, as that *repentance* should not be a necessary condition of it. But if this be the case, does not "*repentance,*" as well as "a *vicarious sacrifice,*" strike at the foundation of the great love and rich mercy of the Deity, in exhibiting *free* salvation to a guilty world? To be consistent, our objectors ought to maintain that it will be freely granted to all, penitent or impenitent; since, according to their ideas, *any necessary condition* of this salvation strikes at the foundation of its freeness. The apostle, however, reasoned differently when he said: "Being justified *freely* by his *grace, through the redemption that is in Christ.*" St. Paul, it should seem, did not think *redemption by Jesus Christ subversive* of the *freeness* of the grace of God, but the *strongest*

proof of it: and he immediately assigns the reason of his having recourse to this method of reconciling sinners to himself; it was not that "his vengeance might be satiated," as has been stated against our doctrine; but "that he might *be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*"[4] Let the apostle again answer our objectors. Redemption by the blood of Jesus, or, "a vicarious sacrifice," it should seem, "strikes at the foundation of the great love and rich mercy of the Deity, in exhibiting free salvation to a guilty world;" but the apostle thought the very reverse of this: and he wishes it to be recorded "*to the praise of the glory of his grace,*" that in Christ "*we have redemption, through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*"[5] Here it is perfectly obvious that we are *forgiven according to the riches of* divine *grace;* and that this is in perfect consistence with an important condition; nay, the very condition objected to by Socinians, *redemption through the blood of Christ.*[6]

[4] Rom. iii. 24—28. [5] Eph. i. 6, 7.

[6] "As to the force of the word *freely,*" says Archbishop Magee, "on which Dr. Priestley relies very much, it is obvious that nothing more is meant by passages that employ this expression in describing God's forgiveness of sinners, than that this forgiveness was *free* with respect to any *merits on the part*

7. It is again said, that "as Christ did and suffered no more than it was his duty to do and suffer, he could merit nothing at the hand of God for others"

Taking him to be *merely human*, this argument respecting *merit* might be unanswerable: but with *our* views of the *Divinity* of Christ, and of his *voluntary assumption of human nature*, it has no weight. He *assumed* a character which he was not compelled by *duty* to do; and therefore whatever he did, in this character, was

of man, or any *claim* which, from repentance, or any other cause, he might be supposed to possess: since, admitting such claim, it would be not free, but earned. And in this very sense it is, that Dr. J. Taylor himself, in his *Key*, &c. (No. 67.) contends that the word *free* is to be understood: 'the blessing of redemption being,' as he says, 'with *regard to us*, of free grace; that is, *not owing to any obedience of ours*.' Any other application of the term, must make the word *free* synonimous with *unconditional;* in which case, forgiveness could not be a free gift, if repentance were required to obtain it; that is, unless it were extended indiscriminately to the impenitent as well as the penitent. So that, in fact, the very use of the word *free*, as applied to God's forgiveness of man, is so far from supporting the opinion of the sufficiency of repentance in itself, that it goes to establish the direct contrary: clearly evincing that repentance can give no *claim* to forgiveness."—*Magee's* Disc. on the Atonement, vol. i. pp. 198, 199, 3rd edit.

gratuitous and meritorious. But let it be kept in mind, that it is not on a transfer of *merit*, but of *penalty*, that the doctrine of the Atonement rests; and what is denied by our opponents is, that the sufferings of Christ could be transferred to the account of others, inasmuch as that he suffered no more than it was his duty to suffer. But whence arose this duty? *From his character as the Son of God?* or from the nature of the *office* which he undertook? If from the former, what becomes of the justice and goodness of the Father, for which our opponents are such strenuous advocates, in inflicting such severe sufferings on a son, who had never offended him, who was holy, without spot, and separate from sinners? Is it consistent then with our ideas of infinite love to inflict *natural*, where there is no connexion with *moral* evil, either federally, or by any possible implication? But if it be said, that his duty to suffer arose out of the nature of the *office* which he undertook, then we admit the fact, but consider it as an incontrovertible proof of the doctrine which our objectors endeavour to overturn. For what was this office? *To bear our sins in his own body—to redeem us to God by his own blood—to become a curse for us—to die the just for the unjust:* that is, it was his duty to pay the penalty which he undertook to pay; or, in

other words, it was his duty to fulfil his engagements, and to finish the work for which he came into the world. And can this excite any surprise? Is it really an argument that his death could not atone for the transgressions of sinners, because that death had become an indispensable duty, from the stipulated agreement of sustaining it for the purpose of Atonement? It would strike a common man as a direct proof of the contrary. The case stands thus:—Our Lord, who undertook nothing in vain, undertook to bear the penalty of sin; when he had undertaken this office, it was his duty to fulfil it: he did fulfil it, and therefore he has borne the penalty of sin. There is no weight therefore in the objection that "as Christ did and suffered no more than it was his duty to do and suffer, he could merit nothing at the hand of God for others."

But in addition to these arguments against the doctrine of the Atonement, which chiefly rest on the attributes and perfections of the divine nature, there are others which are grounded on certain passages of the holy scriptures: and I will now make some remarks on them.

CHAPTER III.

Answer to Objections against the Doctrine of the Atonement, on the alleged ground that it militates against many plain passages of the Holy Scriptures.

If this assertion could be fully supported, it would be fatal to our doctrine, because nothing can be true which is in direct opposition to the plain and obvious meaning of the general tenor of scriptural language. Before we enter however on this objection, it will be proper to make one or two preliminary remarks on the proper method of interpreting scripture, when different parts of it are placed in apparent contradiction to each other. Plain and positive declarations must be received in preference to figurative and allusive passages. Subjects which are treated systematically and argumentatively must have a preponderance over others which seem opposed to them, but which are detached and merely incidental. Certain doctrines are so constantly interwoven in the very texture of scripture, that, without any

direct mention of them, they cannot be separated without breaking in upon and doing violence to the evident train of thought which is uppermost in the writer's mind; and the argument derived from these passages in support of a doctrine, far outweighs a few insulated texts, which seem to militate against it, but which will admit of a fair construction on other principles. These remarks are too obvious to need proof; and they will receive illustration as we proceed with the subject before us.

1. It is alleged, that "it is no where said in the sacred writings that God pardoneth iniquity and passeth by transgression, because he has received satisfaction (or atonement) on behalf of the sinner; but it is said that he pardoneth iniquity, BECAUSE *he delighteth in mercy;* which implies that satisfaction (or atonement) as the ground of forgiveness is totally out of the question."

This assertion assumes, that no consideration is required by God to the pardoning of sin, but the mere movements of his own mercy and compassion to the sinner. It does not admit that divine mercy operates to the benefit of a sinner, through the medium of the Saviour, and that

God has shown, in this way, how greatly he delights in mercy, and what sacrifices, so to speak, he has made for the consistent exercise of it,—for this is the doctrine which is opposed; but that mercy, absolutely and irrespectively of every extraneous consideration, is the sole inducement and motive for the pardoning of sin; and since it is said that God pardoneth iniquity and transgression *because* he delighteth in mercy, therefore it is assumed, that this is the sole and independent ground upon which it is ever conferred upon man. Now, this assumption is singularly at variance both with the objector's own system, with all the facts of the case, and with the very passage on which the whole argument is made to rest.

(1.) If there be any truth in the objection, it subverts, as we have already seen, the doctrine of *Repentance*, as well as that of the Atonement,—which still is maintained by our opponents. Mercy, according to their system, is not so free as to be exercised without regard being had to the penitence of the transgressor; and yet, if this interpretation of the passage be insisted upon, God pardoneth iniquity without *repentance*, "*because* he delighteth in mercy." This declaration of Scripture, therefore, might

be safely left to the solution of our opponents, in consistency with their own system; and when they open the door, as they must do, for the introduction of repentance as *their* condition of pardon, we may fairly avail ourselves of this entrance, to introduce *our* condition of an atoning sacrifice.

(2.) But the objection is in direct opposition to numerous and plain statements of Scripture, and to the whole system of pardon, as connected both with the Mosaic and Christian dispensation. We are told, that it is no where said in the sacred writings, that God pardons sin out of regard to any other consideration than his own mercy. What then are we to understand by such passages as the following? "Being justified freely by his grace, *through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ—whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation,—for the remission of sins.*"[1] "In whom we have redemption through his *blood, the forgivness of sins.*"[2] A truth, which the same apostle repeats in his epistle to the Colossians.[3] And, not to multiply passages on so clear a point, we have the declaration of St. John, that sin is remitted for the sake of Jesus Christ, as our priest and advocate with the father: "If

[1] Rom. iii. 24, 25. [2] Eph. i. 7. [3] Colos. i. 14.

any man sin, we have an advocate with the father, even Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins."[4]

(3.) But what places this doctrine beyond all contradiction is, the plain and positive declaration of the apostle, that "without shedding of blood, there is no remission."[5] Let us enlarge our views of the mercy of God as far as the mind can reach, it still must be restricted in its *channel:* for it flows no where, but through the Atonement; and remains fixed as the throne of mercy itself, that "without shedding of blood, there is no remission."

(4.) But it is not a little remarkable, that the very passage which the impugners of the Atonement lay so much stress upon, as deciding the question against us, does in fact involve this doctrine. It is in the prophecy of Micah,[6] and reads thus: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us, he will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their sins into

[4] 1 Joh. ii. 1, 2. [5] Heb. ix. 22. [6] Micah vii. 18—20.

the depths of the sea." These are, it will be acknowledged, great blessings: there is a freeness and fulness in them which call for the most grateful acknowledgments. But large and ample as they confessedly are, is there no reference made, in the bestowment of them, to the source from which this mercy flows to Israel?—no recognition of the grand promise of a Saviour through whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed? Let the prophet, in continuation, answer the question. "*Thou wilt perform the truth unto Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.*" So that it seems, though God confers pardon, because he delighteth in mercy, yet he does not so delight in mercy as to be regardless of the medium through which alone he can consistently manifest it. He had early revealed the way in which he would bestow this blessing. He had entered into covenant with Abraham and the Patriarchs, engaging that he would, in due time, raise up a Saviour from their seed. In reference to this covenant, he established a system of typical ordinances to foreshadow the sacrifice hereafter to be made, and in pardoning sin, he had always a direct regard to it; and in the passage before us, the prophet rests the whole hope of Israel, the en-

tire expectation of mercy, on God's faithfulness to his oath, which he had "sworn to Abraham and their fathers, from the days of old." So that in the very passage, selected from the whole of the scriptures as the most clear to found an opposition to the doctrine of the Atonement upon, it is most manifest that this doctrine is clearly implied.

(5.) It may however be safely admitted, that promises of pardon are made, where no direct allusion is found to the doctrine in question. When there is a well-understood principle of action, which has been clearly established, which lies at the foundation of an entire system, and which has again and again been referred to, there is no need to make mention of that principle on every occasion when it is acted upon: it would be taken for granted, as a previously established proposition in mathematics, in future reasonings and deductions: and this is precisely the case in the subject before us. Christ is represented as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The sacrifices of the Patriarchal Dispensation—of Abel, of Noah, of Abraham, and of Job, all had regard to the expiatory sacrifice of Christ. The doctrine of the Atonement is the basis of the Mosaic dispensation; all the

ceremonial defilements of the Jews which were typical of moral transgressions, were cleansed by sacrifices of Atonement; and the blood of bulls and of goats, as will hereafter be shown, was typical of the blood of Christ; and the penalty of moral transgressions was remitted out of regard to this sacrifice, in the same way as the legal penalties were commuted by the offering of victims: and it was perfectly unnecessary always to allude to the system, when the benefit of it was conferred by pardoning offences.

We have a remarkable instance of this well-understood principle being really implied, when no mention is made of it, in a passage quoted by St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans, from the Psalms. The apostle is establishing the doctrine of *justification by faith, without the deeds of the law;* and shows that the blessing is conferred, in all cases, out of regard to him, on whom the faith of the believer is made to rest: and he supports this doctrine by a passage from the Psalms, in which no allusion whatever is made to the doctrine; but which speaks simply and irrespectively of all extraneous considerations, of the blessing of forgiveness being granted by the mercy of God. "Even as David," says the apostle, "describeth the blessedness of the man,

unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, (though not a syllable is said by David on this point,) saying, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."[7]

The importance of the doctrine which connects remission of sins with the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, may well excuse me, if I dwell a little longer upon it; particularly as this constitutes the very essence of the Atonement, and is that which Socinians most strenuously deny. I I conceive, then, that this doctrine is most clearly laid down, as a fundamental principle, in the gospel dispensation; and though it may not be so distinctly stated in that of Moses, yet the *principle* of it was established by the Jewish legislator, and that it was in reference to it that God always pardoned transgression. Both these positions I conceive are fully established by our Lord in one of his last discourses with his disciples after his resurrection. Alluding to what he had already taught them, he said: "These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in

[7] Rom. iv. 6—8.

the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations."[8]

In this passage several things are obvious. 1st. That repentance and remission of sins were to be preached *in his name*. 2nd. That they were inseparably connected with *his death and resurrection;* for thus it "BEHOVED *Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name.*" 3dly. That this doctrine was contained in the writings of Moses, of the Prophets, and of David; for in his death and resurrection all things were fulfilled that were written by these authors. 4thly. That though it was taught in the Old Testament, it was less clearly laid down there than in the New Testament; for he opened their understanding, that they might understand these scriptures. It was wrapped up in the Old Testament in types, and ceremonies, and prophetic symbols—all of which had a full and

[8] Luke xxiv 44—47.

distinct meaning;—but the antitype and the accomplishment of the prophecy were wanted to make the whole plain and intelligible; and, lastly, that there had ever been, even from the beginning, a regard to the atoning sacrifice in the pardoning of sin. It is on this last point that I would make one or two observations; all the rest are too clear to need elucidation.

It is a fundamental doctrine of the Bible, that *faith* is the medium through which the forgiveness of sins, by the merits of Christ's righteousness and death, is communicated to the penitent sinner; and it has been asked, how this benefit could be received, through faith, under the Old Testament dispensation,[9] if this doctrine were not clearly laid down, and fully understood? To which I answer, that the fact of atoning sacri-

9 "The hypothesis of our opponent," say Socinians, "is that the death of Christ was vicarious, that sinners never could, consistently with divine justice, be accepted with God, but on the ground of his having died, or engaged to die, in their place and stead; and that his death, as a vicarious sacrifice, is the only possible ground of hope. If this hypothesis be true, we may expect to find that, from the foundation of the world, by Moses and all the Prophets, the vicarious sacrifice of Christ has been pointed out, and placed before sinners as the only ground of hope; for how otherwise could they have any hope, or enjoy acceptance with God?"

fices was well understood by the Patriarchs and the Jews: they were constantly made for moral offences,[1] as well as ceremonial defilements, and remission of the penalty and restoration to their accustomed privileges were conferred in consequence of them. Now, though these were only types and shadows, and had no inherent virtue to obtain these blessings—yet they must necessarily convey the idea of a substance at some time to be realized, and excite an expectation that, in due time, God would fully effect all that these types prefigured.[2] The FACT then of an Atonement hereafter to be made, must be distinguished from the DOCTRINE of that Atonement, as afterwards more clearly laid down and explained. Now, corresponding with this distinction, we must also make a distinction between the *faith* of the Jews, and that of Christians: it was the same in *principle,* though not in all respects, in *object:* it reposed on a remedy which God was to provide for the forgiveness of sin, and which was typified in their daily sacrifices, and especially in the great annual Atonement;

[1] This will be shown hereafter.

[2] The *principle* on which reconciliation with God was to be effected, was fully developed in the primitive sacrifices, but the *exact way* in which that principle should be *applied,* so as ultimately to *effect* that reconciliation, was not fully disclosed till after the crucifixion of our Lord.

and it had regard to the Messiah, the promised seed, and the Saviour of the world; but it had no distinct reference to the *peculiar way* in which that Atonement was to be made, and that salvation was to be accomplished. After the death and resurrection of our Lord, the peculiar and precise nature of the Atonement was understood, and, what had previously existed in principle only, now assumed an exact form and features, and stood forth in its full maturity. And then faith had a definite and precise object to rest upon; and the believer would always connect—as we have historical evidence to prove that he did connect—the remission of sin, with the sacrifice which was offered on the cross for his redemption. Hence it is evident, that the faith of both pious Patriarchs, Jews, and Christians, was the same in *substance*, though not in *distinctness;* the same in *principle*, though not in the *peculiar application* of that principle; that the faith of the former rested in expectation, and had something in it of the vagueness and obscurity necessarily connected with the view of a distant object;—whilst that of the latter was founded on fact, having the object fully before it, and clearly developed and defined in all its parts. All that our Lord did and suffered was previously contained in the scripture, and

he only "*fulfilled* what was written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning him;" but the full scope and meaning and application of these things were not comprehended by his disciples, till "he opened their understanding that they might understand the scripture—that *thus* it was written, and *thus* it *behoved* Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name."

This distinction between the faith of ancient Jews and Christians was illustrated by our Lord, when he said, on one occasion, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad;"[2] and on another, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."[3]

From these remarks taken together, it appears evident, that God has never pardoned sin from the mere impulse (if such an expression may be allowed) of mercy. He has always had regard

[2] John viii. 56. [3] Matt. xiii. 16, 17.

to the atoning sacrifice; and he has "declared his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past," in such a way as "that he might be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." He does indeed delight in mercy; but he never forgets the claims of justice, truth, and holiness; and he has therefore provided a way in which "justice and mercy might meet together, righteousness and peace might kiss each other:" and this is the doctrine of the Atonement. Then, as it regards the *means* by which we receive the benefit of it—it is clear that it is by faith; and this faith is uniform in principle among all the servants of God, and at all times; and consists in a disposition cordially to acquiesce in whatever method God may appoint to reconcile sinners to himself; but it varies in its exercise according to the distinction of the object on which it rests; and therefore has some shades of difference under the Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Christian dispensations.

The observations which have been made on the objection against the Atonement as founded on the scriptural representation of the divine mercy to mankind, irrespective, as it is alleged, of any reference to an atoning sacrifice, may serve as a general answer to objections of this

nature.[4] And I will now take a brief notice of others of a different kind.

[4] Socinians make a great display of texts of this kind; but it would be more to their purpose to show that they are, in any point of view, inconsistent with the doctrine of Atonement; and then in what way, according to their scheme, they are to be reconciled with all those passages which speak of pardon being granted on the consideration and condition of what Christ has done and suffered as the Saviour of sinners. For it should be remembered, that if a *system* of conferring divine mercy on man has any where been laid down in the Holy Scripture, as we allege there has,—and, if it can be proved, as we are confident it may, that the forgiveness of sin is positively stated as resting on that particular system, then we have all the evidence which an established order of things can require, that the righteous Governor of the world has regard to that system, even where no reference is made to it; and ten thousand omissions of this kind can have no weight against this positive enactment. Before they can be adduced with the least effect, it must be shown that the code has been abrogated with as much publicity, as it was at first established. Now, even Dr. Priestley admits, (Theol. Rep. vol. i. p. 252.—I quote from Dr. Magee,) "that some texts do *seem* to represent the pardon of sin as dispensed in consideration of something else than our repentance or personal virtue—and according to their *literal* sense, the pardon of sin is in some way or other procured by Christ."—But he adds, that "since the pardon of sin is sometimes represented as dispensed in consideration of the sufferings, sometimes of the merit, sometimes of the resurrection, and even of the life and obedience of Christ; when it is sometimes Christ and sometimes the Spirit that intercedes

2. It is said that "the scheme of satisfaction (or the Atonement) lays, as the foundation of hope for sinners, something out of and distinct from God; an equivalent, which he is supposed to have received at the hands of their substitute; but the apostle Peter asserts, that *Christ was manifested, that our faith might be in God.*"

The best answer, perhaps, to this objection is to quote the whole passage upon which it professes to ground itself. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; but with the precious blood of Christ, as

for us; when the dispensing of pardon is sometimes said to be the proper act of God the Father; and again, when it is Christ that forgives us; we can hardly hesitate in concluding, that these must be severally, *partial representations*, in the nature of figures and allusions, *which at proper distances are allowed to be inconsistent;*—and from so vague a representation of a matter of fact, founded on texts which carry with them so much the air of figure, allusion, and accommodation, reason and common sense, he says, 'compel us to appeal to the plain general texture of Scripture:'—and thus," adds Dr. Magee, "a great part of Scripture is swept away at one stroke, under the name of figure, allusion, &c. and because Christ is pointed out to us as the means of our salvation, in *every* light in which he is viewed,—reason and common sense (according to Dr. P.) compel us to pronounce him, as not connected with our salvation in *any*."—*Magee's* Discourses, &c. on Atonement, vol. 1. pp. 196, 197. Third edition.

of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot. Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God."[5] Now, "if the *price* of redemption imply an equivalent, the foundation of a sinner's hope lies upon "an equivalent which God has received at the hands of their substitute;" and if there be any contradiction in supposing that, notwithstanding this, the sinner's hope is placed in God, the apostle is chargeable with it, and not those who take their creed from his writings.

3. It is further alleged, that "when Christ illustrated the doctrine of forgiveness of sins, by the case of debtors who had nothing to pay, he added nothing to show that a substitute must pay their debts for them, before they could be discharged; but says, their creditor frankly forgave them. Strange that he should be silent on the most important article in the affair of forgiveness, if the doctrine of satisfaction (or atonement) be true."

To this it may be replied, that neither did our Lord "add any thing to show" that *repentance* was necessary, before they could be forgiven; which,

[5] 1 Pet. i. 18—21.

nevertheless, Socinians contend is an indispensable condition of pardon; but says "*their creditor frankly forgave them.*" Now, is it not equally "strange," on their hypothesis, as on ours, "that he should be silent on the most important article in the affair of forgiveness, if the doctrine of *repentance* be true?" But, in an illustration like this, would it not have been absurd to speak either of *repentance* or an *atonement*, where the reference is made to a debtor and creditor? The transaction has regard merely to *property*, and has no direct relation whatever to *personal character*, which is the proper subject of reward and punishment, and which alone admits of repentance or atonement. This parable, therefore, though it admirably illustrates the readiness of God to forgive sinners, which was the purpose for which it was adduced, could not, without a glaring solecism, have contained any allusion to the *conditions* on which that forgiveness is conferred. Both an atonement and repentance may be necessary, as a *ground* for bestowing pardon, and yet no mention could be made of either, in an illustration borrowed from a pecuniary transaction. Hence, all inferences against the doctrine of the Atonement, drawn from its supposed exact correspondence with the discharge of a pecuniary obligation, are irrelevant. The pardon of sin

may be *illustrated* by the forgiveness of a debt, because they have certain points of resemblance: but neither are sin and a debt, nor the pardon of the one and the forgiveness of the other, intrinsically the same: and to attempt to invalidate an essential doctrine, by conclusions deduced from an assumed parallelism, can scarcely be deemed either candid or honourable. These remarks are a sufficient answer to all the absurdities and blasphemies which, under the form of consequences from the payment of a pecuniary debt, have been thrown upon the doctrine of the Atonement. The reasoning may be correct, if the premises were good; but these being false, the conclusions have no foundation to rest upon.

4. It is again alleged, that "Christ declared that he had power on earth to forgive sins; but he never said that he had bought, and must pay for that power; which would be the fact, on the supposition of satisfaction (or atonement.)"

This is an unguarded assertion; for Christ did more than once assert that he purchased sinners with his own blood; and plainly states he did so for the forgiveness of their sins. What other construction can be placed on passages like these? "This is my blood of the new testament, *which*

is shed for many, for the remission of sins."[6] "The Son of man came—to give his life a ransom for many."[7] "The bread which I shall give you is my flesh, *which I shall give for the life of the world;*"[8] and if so, for the remission of their sins. Surely these passages speak both of a purchased *property* in those who are saved, and the power to exempt them from the penalty of trangression, in consequence of that right.

5. "It has been contended," say Socinians, "that Christ's dying *for us* must imply that his death was vicarious, and that he died to make satisfaction for our sins: but if so, will it not follow," they ask, "that when Christians are called to suffer for Christ, and to lay down their lives for the brethren, they are called to endure vicarious sufferings, to die in the place and stead of the brethren, and to make satisfaction for them; seeing the forms of expression are the same in both places."

To this we reply, that Christians are never said "to suffer for Christ, nor lay down their lives for the brethren," in the *same sense* as Christ is said to suffer for the sins of the world. Is it any where

[6] Matt. xxvi. 28. [7] Matt. xx. 28.
[8] John vi. 51.

said, that Christians gave their lives a *ransom* for many, *for the remission of sins?*[9]—that God hath set them forth to be a *propitiation*, through faith in *their* blood, for the remission of sins?[1]—that *they* died for the ungodly?[2]—that our brethren, the *passover*, were sacrificed for us?[3]—that *they* gave themselves for our sins?[4]—that in *them*, we have redemption through *their* blood, even the forgiveness of our sins?[5]—that *they gave themselves for us*, that *they* might redeem us from all iniquity?[6]—that by *their own blood* they entered once into the holy place, having obtained *eternal redemption for us?*[7]—that *they* appeared to put away sin, by the sacrifice of *themselves?*[8]—that *they* were once offered to bear the sins of many?[9]—that we were not redeemed with corruptible things, but with the precious blood *of the brethren?*[1]—that *St. Paul, Peter*, or *Stephen* have suffered for sins, *the just for the unjust*, that *they* might bring us to God?[2]—that the blood of *the saints, his sons*, cleanseth us from all sin?[3]—that *they* were slain, and have redeemed us to God by *their own blood?*[4] The very quotation of these passages is, it is presumed, more than

[9] Matt. xxvi. 28. [1] Rom. iii. 25. [2] Rom. v. 6. [3] 1 Cor. v. 7. [4] Gal. i. 4. [5] Col. i. 14. [6] Tit. ii. 14. [7] Heb. ix. 12. [8] ix. 26. [9] ix. 28. [1] 1 Pet. i. 18. [2] 1 Pet. iii. 18. [3] 1 John i. 7. [4] Rev. v. 9.

sufficient to answer the argument here adduced. They, at once, show the difference of the manner in which Christ and the martyrs died for the brethren; and how little can be safely concluded from similarity of expression in parts of sentences, and in reference to different subjects. But the plain and obvious meaning of passages of scripture is often attempted to be set aside by verbal criticism; and the mind of the common Christian is bewildered by arbitrary canons of interpretation, and minute observations on particular words. Thus it has been contended, that "what *must* be the meaning of words in some passages, and *may* be the meaning in all, is always the true one;" and in the application of this rule to the particle *for*, it is asserted that, since it must, in some places, be translated *on account of*, and may be so in all—that is its proper construction wherever it occurs. It is in this way that the various words in the original[5] which are generally translated *for*, are at once disposed of, and the doctrine of the Atonement, or the substitution of Christ's death for that of the sinner, is entirely set aside. But can any thing be more gratuitous than the assumption of the canon of interpretation on which this conclusion rests? Is it not obvious to com-

[5] ὑπὲρ, περὶ, ἀντὶ, διὰ.

mon sense, that what *may* be translated in one way, will *admit* of another construction? yea, and that the *probability* is, that it *ought* to have another? For what does this conditional word *may* intimate, but that we are not absolutely driven to the necessity of a particular construction, inasmuch as the word has now and then been found to have a different meaning, and may possibly admit it in this. This is indeed a fair mode of reasoning, when we find an insulated passage of scripture apparently opposed to numerous others of a plainly different meaning; but it can never be had recourse to with safety, when the general tenor of concurrent scriptures, such as those above referred to, have a directly contrary character; for this would be to substitute the rare exception for the general rule. The only legitimate mode of interpretation is to give every word its natural and obvious sense, unless the context manifestly require a different construction; and this, for the plain reason that every writer, who wishes to be understood, uses words in their customary sense; and if he be driven to the necessity of using them in any other, he trusts to the context to make his meaning clear. It is in vain therefore to tell us that the word *for*, *may* signify in all cases *on account of*, because the question still recurs, what is its natural and in-

trinsic meaning? for it is in this only that it ought to be taken, unless the context render it absolutely necessary to interpret it otherwise.[6]

[6] That ὑπὲρ and ἀντὶ naturally convey the idea of *substitution*, no competent critic will deny. To adduce examples of so well established a fact would be superfluous; but those who would see a few most pertinent ones, may consult Raphelius (as quoted by Dr. Magee) on Rom. v. 8. I will however add a note from the Scholæ of Valckenarius on 1 Cor. xv. 3. which will be respected by every scholar and candid Christian. Ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν] *Mortuus est* pro *peccatis nostris.* Phrasis est in N. F. usitatissima, qua Christus dicitur fuisse mortuus, seu, mortem subiisse ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν. vel simpliciter ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν. Sciendum autem, et rite tenendum est, ἀποθανεῖν ὑπέρ τινος non tantum in N. F. sed etiam apud Scriptores profanos, significare *mori loco alterius*, ut certe Christus non tantum *in commodum* nostrum mortuus est, sed *nostrûm loco* mortem subire non recusavit, quam nos fueramus commeriti. Eandem phrasin veteres adhibuere in historia *Alcestidis* denarranda. Quum enim pro *Admeto* neque pater, neque mater, mori voluissent, uxor se Alcestis obtulit, et *pro eo vicaria morte* interiit, ut scribit Hyginus CLI. Habuit is ante oculos Argumentum Dramatis *Euripidei*: Ἄλκηστις ἡ γυνὴ ἐπέδωκεν ἑαυτὴν, μηδετέρου τῶν γονέων ἐθελήσαντος ὑπὲρ τοῦ παιδὸς ἀποθανεῖν. ἀνδρεία γε ἡ Ἄλκηστις ἑκοῦσα ὑπεραπέθανεν Ἀδμήτου. *sponte sua et volens* pro marito, mortem subiit. Sicuti a Latinis isto sensu frequentatur *pro*, ita et a Græcis, pro ἀντὶ, *vice*, *loco*, alterius mori, θανεῖν πρό τινος. In *Eurip.* Alcest. v. 18. and sic alibi sæpe. Vide also *Eurip. Androm.* v. 411. Phoin. v. 1011. Consult Matt. xx. 28; xxvi. 28. John vi. 51. Rom. v. 6. 1 Cor. v. 7. Tit. ii. 14.

6. "God is never said to be reconciled to the world," say Socinians, "because he was never at enmity with it: it was the world that was at enmity with God, and was to be reconciled by coming to the knowledge of his goodness to them. The New Testament knows no such language, as that God was reconciled to the world."

This would strike the ear of any one, conversant with the Holy Scriptures, as very extraordinary language, and induce him to enquire whether, seeing that the "whole world lieth in wickedness," God has at length become reconciled to sin, and withdrawn that "wrath" which he had read as being "revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." But, waiving this, let us enquire whether it be true that the New Testament says nothing of God being reconciled to the world, but speaks only of man being reconciled to God. The first passage that occurs respecting reconciliation is Matt. v. 23, 24. "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought AGAINST THEE, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be RECONCILED to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Who is the person here offended, and of course, needs reconciliation? Is it not the individual who had

something to allege against the person who had brought his gift to the altar, and whose just displeasure it was necessary to avert, before he could piously offer his gift? It was not the enmity surely of the offender, but of the offended, that was to be removed; and the reconciliation to be effected must be with him who had been injured. So that it appears that the very passage on which this novel doctrine is founded, (for it is on this text that the argument is chiefly built,) proves directly the reverse of that for which it is cited, and shows, beyond all doubt, that it is not the sinner who is to be reconciled to God, by laying aside his enmity, but God, who is to be reconciled to the sinner, by the latter implicitly submitting himself to such terms as his offended judge shall prescribe. Now, this passage explains the sense in which other texts, where the same expression of being "reconciled" occurs, are to be understood. If, for instance, it could have been at all doubted, that, when the apostle says, "we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God," he meant, "submit yourselves to God, and accept his terms of peace," the passage, on which we have just commented, would place that meaning beyond all controversy. It is God, and not man, who is to be reconciled; and let the reader now judge how true the assertion is, that "the New

Testament knows no such language as that God was reconciled to the world."

7. It is again alleged, that "the law of God has been placed in a false light, by the belief of the doctrine of satisfaction (or the atonement): hence the divine law has been represented as a mere covenant of works. It has been said, that it knows nothing of mercy; and that it would be dishonoured, if a sinner were pardoned without an innocent victim first suffering its penalties. All this appears," to Socinians, "to be contrary to truth. So far from the law being a mere covenant of works, it was introduced on the ground of God's previous promise of grace to Abram, to which it was not in opposition."[7]

When it is said, that "the law is a covenant of works," no more is meant than what the apostle asserts in the very chapter to which reference is here made, "The man that doeth them, shall live in them; and cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." There were two ways of seeking to obtain eternal life; one "by the deeds of the law," and the other "by faith in Christ Jesus." Whoever sought life in the former

[7] Gal. iii. 17.

way, were under "a covenant of works;" those who sought it in the latter, were under "a covenant of grace." By the former, the apostle says, *it is evident that no man is justified;* and he assures us, that *the just shall live by faith.*

We do indeed acknowledge that the law of Moses, taken collectively, as consisting of moral and ceremonial duties, was a covenant of grace; and by no means set aside the promise made to Abraham, because the sacrifices it prescribed provided a typical remedy for transgression; but we also maintain that those of the Jews, who partook of the grace of it, did so, not by their obedience to the moral law, but in virtue of their atoning sacrifices, which prefigured that which was offered upon the cross by Jesus Christ, and their faith in the promised Messiah, who, as "the Lamb of God," was "slain from the foundation of the world," and was to "take away the sin of the world." Hence it follows, that justification was always obtained by faith in Christ, and not "by the deeds of the law."

But it is said, that "instead of the law knowing nothing of mercy, we are told in the decalogue of God's showing mercy unto thousands of generations."

This, even in the sense of the objector, only shows that grace and mercy were published along with the law, and that, with the curse, God had provided a way for conferring a blessing, which no one denies. But the inference intended to be drawn from it, that mercy is to be obtained under the *moral* law, for transgressors, is not supported by the case adduced. The whole passage runs thus: *I am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of* THEM THAT LOVE ME AND KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS. It will be observed that the grace here promised is not to them that BREAK the law, but to the posterity of them that LOVE God, and KEEP his commandments. But it will be obvious to the most cursory reader of this clause in the commandment, that no reference is here made to the *penal* consequences of *personal* transgression, which is the case requiring an atonement; but simply to the fact established by universal experience as well as thus announced by the law, that children, even to remote generations, often partake of the temporal good or evil arising from the virtuous or vicious course of conduct of their progenitors.

The notion, then, that the doctrine of the

Atonement is opposed to any part of the holy scriptures, has, I trust, been satisfactorily refuted. Those passages which have been brought by our opponents to impugn it, when examined and collated with other texts, are found to be, not only in perfect harmony with it, but many of them direct proofs of it: and I am persuaded that any other passage, which at first sight may be thought to be at variance with the Atonement, when carefully investigated, will be seen to be perfectly consonant with it. But the weight of this remark will be more sensibly felt when I adduce the vast mass of scriptural evidence which will be found in support of it; for the inevitable inference from these multiplied passages must be, that a doctrine so plainly revealed, so variously illustrated, so essential to every religious dispensation, and so interwoven in the very texture of this sacred book, from the beginning to the end of it, cannot be contradicted by other portions of the same scriptures. To suppose this possible, is to give up the very lowest claim of its being a divine revelation. If, therefore, any insulated passage should *seem* to be in opposition to it, it may justly be assumed that it is *only* in appearance; and that, in real fact, it is in perfect unison with the rest of the sacred volume. But I am anticipating what will come with greater propriety and advan-

tage in another part of this Treatise. In the mean time I proceed to the fourth and last class of objections brought by Socinians against this doctrine.

CHAPTER IV.

Answer to Objections against the Doctrine of the Atonement, on the alleged ground that it is founded on an unauthorized assumption of the piacular and vicarious nature of Sacrifices; and the perpetual Obligation of the Law of Moses.

One of the principal arguments in support of the Atonement is derived from the expiatory quality of animal sacrifices under all the dispensations of religion previous to that of the gospel. It is contended, that ever since the introduction of sin, a remedial process has been carrying on, by the wisdom and goodness of God, for removing both its penal and moral effects. This process has been developing itself in various successive forms, each making further advances towards the perfection of the system, and each attended with increased light and information, as to the exact nature and quality of the ultimate remedy. It is

this which constitutes the most important feature of divine revelation; and it may be fitly compared to "the rising sun, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." At its first dawning, it rendered the whole horizon visible; but it did not cast sufficient light to give distinctness to every object: but at each successive advance in its course it made some fresh discovery, till, at length, it brought life and immortality, with every thing pertaining to both, fully to light, in the dispensation of the gospel.

Now, the very fact that the whole of this process is *remedial,* is a presumptive evidence that, from the very commencement, so much of the plan of recovery was made known as was necessary for the direction and salvation of the primitive race of men: for otherwise, we must suppose that, notwithstanding the intimations given them of life, they were left in ignorance of the way in which it was to be obtained;—that, though he gave them reason to expect mercy, he said nothing of the channel through which it was to flow; and though God had his own eye perpetually fixed on the method by which "justice and mercy were to meet together, righteousness and peace to kiss each other," yet he never gave them an intimation

of his plan, but left them, in all the perplexity of uncertainty and distress, to discover, as well as they could, how a sinner could be just before God, and be admitted into his favour;—a supposition as much at variance with our ideas of the goodness of God, as it is with his customary dealings with man, and the plainest declarations of scripture. Hence we might fairly presume, from the very necessities of man, and the goodness of God, as displayed in his first intimation of mercy, that there would be something in each dispensation of religion, which should have a prominent and decided reference to the great object of them all;—something which should lead those who were anxious about their everlasting well-being, to repose upon a solid foundation, and to adopt the right method of recovering the lost image and favour of God. It would not be necessary that they should have a clear perception of all that was peculiar to this salvation—of the full character of him that was to save them—of all the means and every exact step by which he was to accomplish the work, nor of all the circumstances which should accompany it. But the great *fact* of God's intention to save man, and the grand *principle* on which this salvation was to rest, we may reasonably suppose would be re-

vealed, and stand out, in every dispensation of religion, with a prominency which could not fail to attract universal attention.

Nor is it a little remarkable, that there is one grand peculiarity—one singular rite—one prominent feature, running through each of these dispensations, which is admirably adapted to display and illustrate both the fact and the principle to which reference has just been made; and this is SACRIFICE. From the very commencement of religious worship, after sin had entered into the world, down to the time when Jesus Christ suffered death upon the cross, this singular rite was universally practised. Intimation of it seems to be given, where no mention whatever is made of the manner in which the primitive family worshipped God, after their expulsion from Paradise; for it is difficult to divine for what purpose those animals could have been put to death, of whose skins the Lord God made coats and clothed Adam and his wife,[8] unless they were slain for sacrifice; especially as it appears probable that animal food was not permitted till after the deluge. Be this however as it may, in the very first account we have upon record of any worship being paid to the supreme Being, mention is made of sacrifice; and

[8] Gen. iii. 21.

in such a way as to mark the peculiar suitableness of it to man as a sinner, and the direct approbation of it, by God, as offered under this character. "It came to pass," says the sacred historian, "that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect."[9]

From this period, down to the time of Noah's leaving the ark after the deluge, there is no act of religious worship recorded; but the very next instance which occurs, again places sacrifice before us as the distinctive feature of religious worship; for "Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings unto the Lord;" and here also, as in the case of Abel, God manifests his approbation of the offering; for "the Lord," it is added, "smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake."[1]

The next account we have of any religious service is in the commencement of Abraham's

[9] Gen. iv. 3—5. [1] Gen. viii. 20, 21.

history; and there also the same fact meets us as on the two former occasions. "The Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and *then builded he an altar unto the Lord,* who appeared unto him:"[2] and at almost each successive remove, we find the patriarch raising an altar, and calling on the name of the Lord.

The next mention that is made of sacrifice is that ever memorable one of this patriarch, offering up his son, in obedience to the direct command of God, who had said, "take thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." And when his hand was stayed from slaying his son, he saw "behind him a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns, and Abraham took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering *in the stead of his son;*"[3] and this instance marks the grand *peculiarity* of sacrifice, its vicarious character;—he offered the ram *instead of his son.*

After these instances, it is unnecessary to refer to the cases of sacrifice in the patriarchal age.

[2] Gen. xii. 7. [3] Gen. xxii. 2, &c.

It is too obvious to need remark, that this was the great peculiarity which pervaded the whole of religious service down from Abel to the time of Moses. With Moses commenced a new dispensation; and it was distinguished from that which preceded it by various particulars; but it had one thing in common with it, and which, above all others, was conspicuous in the ritual of this divinely commissioned legislator. This was sacrifice. It was commanded upon all occasions of divine worship. It constituted the essence of all the services on the grand festivals. It was the main affair in the greatest of all solemnities, on the annual return of the great day of Atonement: and it formed a part of every morning and evening service. It was continued down to the very crucifixion of our blessed Lord, and the consequent dissolution of the Mosaic dispensation; and then it ceased for ever, as being superseded by its great antitype, and having answered all the purposes for which it was originally designed.

Now, these facts are deserving of peculiar attention, both as establishing the importance attached to sacrifice from the first introduction of sin, through every generation of man down to the time of Christ,—as forming the connecting link

between each dispensation, and as terminating at that very point when it was useless as a sign, and had introduced the great sacrifice which it was intended to prefigure. These facts seem naturally to lead to the conclusion, that sacrifice was originally instituted by God;—that it had a direct reference to the salvation of man;—and was significant of what our Lord accomplished on the cross. And if any thing were wanted to complete the evidence of this original design of sacrifice, we should find it supplied in the scriptural declarations, that he was "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,"[4] that he was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world:"[5] and especially in the epistle to the Hebrews, which seems to have been written with the express design of connecting the death of our Lord with the sacrifices under the Old Testament dispensations.

This, then, is the *primâ facie* evidence of the reference which sacrifice has to the death of Christ. The death of animals offered in sacrifice, and the death of Christ offered on the cross, appear to have an obvious relation to each other; and that, not occasional and incidental, but from

[4] John i. 29. [5] Rev. xiii. 8.

the beginning, uniform, intended, studied and exact. They answer to each other as shadow and substance. There are not the same number of lineaments in each, nor the same distinctness and minuteness of features; but there is the same *outline*, the same external correspondence, so as to mark their certain relation to each other, and their accordance with nothing else but themselves. Now, if we can clearly ascertain what was the original design of sacrifice, and in what light God approved of, and sanctioned it, then we shall be able to form a correct view of what was intended by the death of Christ, and under what aspect it is considered by God himself. If sacrifices, from the first, were offered as piacular, as expiatory of moral transgression, as an atonement for guilt, and were accepted of God as such; or, if they had not this *original* design, but were *afterwards* commanded by God to be presented with this reference, and were recognised by God as such; then it will follow that the death of Christ was piacular, expiatory, and atoning; and that it is in this light that it is primarily and essentially to be considered. But against this view of the subject, there are two kinds of opponents. They deny, in common, that sacrifices were originally instituted by God; or that they were either offered or ac-

cepted at first as piacular and expiatory: but that after having been presented in the patriarchal age as thank-offerings for blessings received, or as penitential acknowledgments of sins committed, they were, under the Mosaic dispensation, commanded by God, and directed to be offered as expiations and atonements for certain ceremonial offences; but without any reference to the death of Jesus Christ, as an atonement for the sins of the world. But, notwithstanding this denial of any primeval or Mosaic reference of sacrifice to the crucifixion of our Lord, one part of these objectors are as strenuous advocates for the doctrine of the Atonement, as those who go farther backward in their views of the original institution and design of sacrifice; and maintain that it was fully revealed in the prophetic era, and was intentionally reserved for the last and greatest display of God's intentions of mercy to mankind, previously to the actual appearance of the Son of God on earth, and his expiating the sins of the world on the cross.[6]

[6] The doctrine of the Atonement, says Mr. Davison, in his "Inquiry into the origin and intent of Primitive Sacrifice," is of the very essence of the Christian faith; it is the chief article of its characteristic system; but it is also that one point of its system, which is the latest touched upon in the predictions of prophecy, not being directly introduced in a specific notice,

These writers, therefore, though they deprive this doctrine of one of its most powerful sup-

so far as I know, before the predictions of the prophet Isaiah. For although some of the prophetic Psalms foreshow the *sufferings* of the Messiah, they do not exhibit the *vicarious* and *expiatory* import of these sufferings, as the prophet Isaiah does. pp. 160, 161."

This view of the subject corresponds mainly with that of Bishop Warburton; and it has arisen out of the system of these able writers, that the developement of God's purposes of mercy to man has been gradual, and the several parts of it brought to light, at different and distant periods of time. Assuming then, this progressive character of divine revelation, Mr. Davison contends, that if the doctrine of the Atonement, the full developement of which was reserved for the gospel era, was originally taught in the primitive and patriarchal age, then that progressive character of revelation, which is evidently stamped on every part of it, is, in this respect destroyed: and, as he denies that the vicarious and expiatory nature of sacrifice was understood by the Patriarchs, or was taught by Moses, there must have been a retrogradation, instead of a progression of divine knowledge. Hence, he sets himself to disprove the divine original of sacrifice, and that it was ever offered to, or accepted of, God as substitutive and piacular. If, however, it can be shown that the general outline, and no more, of God's plan was originally revealed—that the parts of the scheme were filled up at various and remote intervals—that Moses taught more of it than was taught to the first family, or known to the Patriarchs—that David and the prophets continued, in succession, to throw fresh light upon it—and that it was ultimately realized on the cross, and displayed in its fulness by the apostles of our Lord in their dis-

ports, and, in this part of their argument, seem to concur with Socinians, are nevertheless carefully to be distinguished from them; for the latter deny the doctrine of the Atonement altogether, and proceed to much greater lengths than the former, even in rejecting the argument from sacrifice; for Mr. Davison, to whom reference is made in the preceding note, towards the end of his "Inquiry," thus writes: "Primitive sacrifice therefore must be left in the obscurity under

courses and epistles, then there will be no plea for the notion of retrogradation in the system, though it be maintained that the atonement was symbolically represented by primitive sacrifices, and that the shadows gave way to the substance, when the penalty of man's transgressions was paid on the cross. Be this, however, as it may, if it can be shown that sacrifice is really of divine institution, and was first appointed in the prime of the world; and that it was more fully expanded in the ritual of Moses, and was really typical of the great Atonement of Christ, then, whatever becomes of Mr. Davison's or Bishop Warburton's system, we must hold fast the truth, and adhere to the record. That such was the original institution of sacrifice has been shown by many, and recently, in an answer to Mr. Davison, by Mr. Molesworth; but especially by Mr. Faber, in his "Treatise on the Origin of Expiatory Sacrifice." This author has proved his point with a force of argument and clearness of evidence which must, I should think, carry conviction to every unprejudiced mind. The controversy has lately been ably reviewed in the fifth number of the British Critic and Theological Quarterly Review.

which the scripture has laid it;" and thus concludes, in italics, "*I do not press a peremptory decision against its divine origin.*"[7]

It is, however, of great importance that this matter should be carefully investigated: and though it cannot be expected in this treatise that I should go into the full discussion of it; nor, since the elaborate work to which the last note refers, is it necessary, yet I think it right to state such evidence in support of the divine origin and typical reference of sacrifice, as appears to myself conclusive, and likely to satisfy the candid reader. I will therefore attempt, as briefly as I can consistently with perspicuity, to show—

I. *That the* SACRIFICE OF ANIMALS *was of divine institution.*

II. *That they were originally offered and accepted as piacular and vicarious.*

III. *That they had a direct reference to the death of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

If these propositions can be made out, the inference to the vicarious and expiatory nature of the death of Christ will be clear and unavoidable; and it will be evident that, from the first intro-

[7] P. 168.

duction of sin, regard was had in sacrifice, both by him who offered and him who accepted it, to an atonement hereafter to be made for the sins of the world.

I. I am induced to believe that ANIMAL SACRIFICE *was originally of divine institution;* for the following reasons:—

1. *I find that the* FIRST *and only thing mentioned in the religious services of the primitive family, and which was received with the divine approbation, was* ANIMAL SACRIFICE. Cain presented an offering of the fruits of the ground; Abel a sacrifice of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat. Cain's offering was rejected, and Abel's was accepted. This fact, taken in connexion with the explanation given of it in the epistle to the Hebrews, that "by *faith* Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain,"[8] conveys to my mind the divine institution of ANIMAL SACRIFICE. And I rest simply on the facts of the case. If we might have previously conjectured the probable result of these different offerings, on the ground of their relative suitableness to express religious feeling, and to obtain divine approbation, we should not have hesitated to decide in favour of Cain's.

[8] Heb. xi. 4.

It was a mark of gratitude for the success of his labours, and an appropriate expression of his sense of obligation, and such an offering as it would seem reasonable that his benefactor would kindly accept. Abel's, on the contrary, was a bloody victim, and carried, on the very face of it, something disgusting and repulsive. Sin had, indeed, introduced death into the world; and animals, it should seem, had partaken of the calamity: but that the *infliction* of death on any of God's creatures, and that in the way of doing God service—unless he had given direction to that effect, and had explained the cause—could be acceptable to the Divine Being, and receive a marked token of his approbation, is utterly incredible; and the thought of such a sacrifice could never have spontaneously arisen in the mind of Abel: and I state this, with a perfect recollection of all that has been written to show the possibility of its having originally occurred to Abel, that such a sacrifice would be acceptable to God, both as eucharistic of his favours, and deprecatory of his displeasure. For, let us suppose the fact, that bloody victims offered in sacrifice are a proper way of expressing our gratitude to God for the blessings he confers upon us, and that the idea of offering them would spontaneously arise in a well disposed

mind; whence is it, that no one, in this enlightened day, ever presents such an offering to God? It is not that Christianity forbids such a mode of making our acknowledgment of divine favours: it forbids no way of presenting a *reasonable* "sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God;" and and if this were of such a nature, it would be perfectly consistent with divine revelation. The only reason, then, for its universal discontinuance since the sacrifice of Christ on the cross is, that it never suggests itself as a suitable way of making an offering unto God. And correspondent with this statement is the fact, that many of the most enlightened of heathen philosophers have expressed their surprise that men should ever have thought that such sacrifices could be acceptable to the Deity.[9] We may conclude,

9 "After all that has been said," says Mr. Faber, (p. 23, 24,) "by Bishop Warburton and himself, (Mr. Davison,) we may not unreasonably doubt, whether, *independently of a divine command, and as contradistinguished from mere vegetable oblation,* ANIMAL SACRIFICE, which involves the practice of slaughtering and burning an innocent and sensitive victim, could *ever,* under *any* aspect, have been adopted as a rite likely to gain the favour of the Deity.

"On this point, we ourselves, accustomed as we are from our infancy to the perusal of scripture, are perhaps not altogether competent judges. Would we learn how so singular an insti-

then, with perfect safety, that the idea of presenting a victim in sacrifice would never have

tution *must* strike the minds of thinking men, who had not been prepossessed by our own course of early education, we should do well to hear the remarks of those, who, independently of the light afforded by revelation, philosophically contemplated the bare rite of ANIMAL SACRIFICE, as it existed under paganism.

" 1. Now, it is a remarkable fact, that persons, thus circumstanced, have not unfrequently expressed their astonishment how and upon what rational principles, so strange an institution as that of ANIMAL SACRIFICE could ever have originated: for as to the notion of its being *pleasing* to the Deity, such a matter struck them as being a manifest impossibility.

" (1.) Thus we are told that Pythagoras and Plato, so far from being able to account for the origin of ANIMAL SACRIFICE on any possibly rational grounds, expressed their amazement how the dismal, though universal, custom of defiling all places with the blood of brute beasts, could ever, in the first instance, have been excogitated. Jamb. de Vit. Pythag. p. 106—118.

" (2.) Thus also Porphyry introduces an ancient Greek poet, who roundly declares the utter impossibility of ANIMAL SACRIFICE being grateful to the gods, notwithstanding men hoped to gain their favour by the adoption of such an ordinance. Porphyr. de Abstin. lib. ii. § 58. p. 96.

" (3.) And thus Porphyry himself, espousing the sentiments of Theophrastus, strenuously argues against the practice of ANIMAL SACRIFICE, as being clearly both unlawful, and noxious and unholy. *When we slaughter an animal which has been guilty of no injustice,* says he, *do we not practically confess that we ourselves act unjustly? Therefore, on the ground of honour, we ought in no wise to sacrifice animals. Neither ought*

entered the mind of Abel, without a divine command.

we to sacrifice them for the sake of procuring certain benefits. For he who seeks to obtain a benefit through an act of injustice, may well incur the suspicion of entertaining but small gratitude for any benefit which he may receive. Therefore we ought not to sacrifice animals to the gods, through a hope of deriving benefit from them. Hence, if we may not sacrifice animals for any of these reasons, it is manifest, that any sacrifice of animals to the gods cannot but be unlawful. Theophrast. et Porphyr. apud Euseb. Prop. Evan. lib. iv. c. 15. p. 90, 91. Lutet. Rob. Stephan. 1544.

" 2. These masters of reasoning among the Gentiles were encountered by a fact, alike remarkable and indisputable; *the universal prevalence of* ANIMAL SACRIFICE. For the origination of the rite, under the aspect of a human invention, they professed themselves unable to account on any satisfactory principles: and Porphyry, after Theophrastus, argues, that the practice is altogether irreconcileable to right reason, and that on no such ground can the difficulty be solved." Faber's Treatise on the Origin of Expiatory Sacrifice, pp. 23—25.

I cannot help, at the conclusion of this note, submitting to the consideration of those who so strenuously insist that ANIMAL SACRIFICE did not originate in the divine command, but was the spontaneous suggestion of reason; and was so general, that all the world, in the earliest ages of it, adopted it; whether, in denying it a place among *positive institutions,* they may not be advancing it to the rank of *a moral duty:* for, if it were a practice which so naturally arose from the dictates of reason and reflection, that all men fell into it, then it seems to acquire the character of *a duty, the reason of which was obvious to all,*

2. The probability that Abel offered his sacrifice in conformity with a divine institution, is greatly increased by the fact, that, *at this period, a constant and familiar intercourse was kept up between God and this primitive family.* This

irrespective of the will of the supreme Legislator, and which has its origin in the very constitution of man; and, independent of all changes in the forms, and diversity in the dispensations of religion, carries along with it an indispensable and perpetual obligation. Should there be any justice in this remark, it remains for them further to reflect, whether this notion of sacrifice be not directly opposed to the authority of our blessed Lord, who said to the ceremonious Pharisees: "Go ye, and learn what that means, I will have mercy and not sacrifice." In this contradistinction between conflicting duties, the superiority is given to moral above positive precepts;—but if we deny that sacrifice is a *positive* institution, and assert that it is coeval with the human race, and a natural dictate of our common reason, then the obligation to practise it is co-extensive with that of mercy, and is of co-paramount importance. The scriptures, however, never view it in this light; but represent it as one of those duties, the performance of which has for its object the sole will of the Legislator, and may become offensive, when it usurps the place of moral practices: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats.——Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings—cease to do evil; learn to do well." Isa. i. 11, &c.

is evident from the instruction given them respecting their clothing; the marked and visible difference between the manner in which the offerings of Cain and Abel were received; the remonstrance with Cain, on his unreasonable resentment against Abel on account of that difference; the instruction given to Cain, of the proper way of avoiding a repetition of the repulse; the enquiry made of him, after he had murdered his brother; the curse denounced upon him in consequence of it; and the future conference with Cain, and the mark placed upon him, to avoid the vindictive hand of an avenger: all these things plainly indicate, that the intercourse, which had formerly subsisted in Paradise between God and the first family, was still maintained. Now, can it be supposed, under such circumstances, that no instruction would be asked or given, on the all-important subject of religion? It is true, nothing of this kind is upon record; no mention whatever is made of any thing connected with religion, save one solitary fact respecting an offering that was presented by Cain, and a sacrifice that was offered by Abel, with the rejection of the one, and the acceptance of the other. But is it at all credible, that in this incipient state of things—in the new and distressing circumstances in which sin had re-

cently placed the first family, with their unavoidable anxiety to know in what way a sinner could be accepted by God, by what means they, and the generations to spring from them, should maintain intercourse with their heavenly Father, and what worship would be approved by him; is it credible that, with such frequent opportunities as they then enjoyed of satisfying all their desires on these important topics, and receiving information, as we know they did, on things of a very subordinate nature, they should never of themselves have enquired, or that God should never have condescended to give them instruction, in what way they should worship him, or what services would be acceptable to him? We grant, indeed, that we are not at liberty to determine the precise nature either of their enquiries, or of the answers God might return; but we are compelled to believe that *some* questions would be put, and *some* instruction given; and when we find that one thing, and one thing only, is recorded of their acceptable religious services, and that altogether so unnatural as to be irreconcileable with the suggestions of reason; and yet that, strange as this peculiarity was, it was introduced into every future dispensation of religion, and was universally practised till the crucifixion of our blessed Lord,

when all the plans and purposes of God's mercy to man were fully developed; that it then ceased for ever, but was still frequently referred to as bearing a direct relation to the death of Christ; can we hesitate for a moment to decide, that this peculiarity,—this animal sacrifice, was a matter of divine revelation and of express command?

3. But I further add, that this account of the origin of ANIMAL SACRIFICE, *answers all the circumstances connected with the instance of it which we are now considering.*

On the supposition of ANIMAL SACRIFICE being a human invention, it appears difficult to reconcile the statement of facts, connected with the first instance of its being offered, with such an hypothesis. If God had given no direction or command upon the subject, the offering of Cain would have appeared far more likely, as we have seen, to obtain the divine approbation, than the bloody victim of Abel. There would seem, also, to be something mysterious, if not unintelligible, in the remonstrance which God made with Cain for the unreasonableness of his anger upon the occasion. If he had presented the more *rational* offering, he had *cause* to be displeased at the reception it had met with: and if he had no

guide but the dictates of his own mind, to know what offering would be acceptable, he had done well in presenting the fruits of the field rather than the firstlings of the flock; and he must have been at a loss to know what was meant by "sin lying at the door." Nor shall we find, on this hypothesis, the account give by the apostle of this transaction in the least more intelligible. He informs us that *Abel's* was the more *excellent* sacrifice, and that it derived its superiority from the *faith* with which it was offered: but, in the eye of reason, we have already seen, that Cain's "fruit of the ground" was more appropriate than Abel's animal sacrifice; and it is inconceivable what *faith* could have to do with the mere dictates of reason, and the ideas of propriety. On this scheme, then, we meet with nothing but perplexity and mystery, both in the narrative, and the subsequent opinion given of it by an inspired apostle. It is true, indeed, that ingenious criticism may give such a character and turn to the affair as to render it apparently consistent and intelligible,—and what is there which ingenuity cannot make plausible? But the *natural* construction—the *obvious* import of the narrative would lead us to no such interpretation: and though, where the plain and first-sight sense of a passage would bring us to a conclusion at variance with some

generally recognized truth, we should be authorized to call in the aid of criticism to make it harmonize with the analogy of faith; yet, where that sense is in no such opposition to other truths; but, on the contrary, perfectly agrees with them, there is the greatest probability that the obvious is the genuine and real sense. Now these remarks apply to the case in question. On the supposition that both Cain and Abel had been previously instructed on the subject of animal sacrifice and other offerings, it is natural to conclude that Cain's was rejected, because it was either unsuited to his character, or he had not conformed to his instructions: and that Abel's was accepted for the contrary reasons. When Cain, again, was angry at the preference given to Abel's offering, nothing could be more reasonable than the reply, "if thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door;" as if it had been said, "if thy character and course of conduct correspond with the directions given thee respecting the proper sacrifice, undoubtedly both thou and thy offering would be accepted; but if thy manner of life be unsuitable to the offering thou hast made, and at variance with the instructions thou hast received on that subject, the proper remedy is to correct the mistake, to conform to thy in-

structions, to offer the prescribed sacrifice, and all will be well;—the remedy is at hand,—the sacrifice lies at the door, and all that remains is, duly to present it."

This natural construction of the narrative equally corresponds with the account of the transaction given by St. Paul. "By faith," he informs us, "Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain;" that is, by implicitly following the directions he had received respecting the proper offerings to be presented in religious worship, and believing that God was the best judge of what was suitable on such an occasion, he "offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts." According to this view of the subject, every thing falls in naturally with the narrative; strictly harmonizes with the view of the apostle; and correctly corresponds with the whole analogy of faith. The passage, indeed, admits of further *illustration* by the aid of criticism, and the natural interpretation is greatly *confirmed*, by a nearer examination of the words and the construction of the whole; and I shall soon make reference to the *additional* evidence which a minute investigation of it affords; but it is sufficient for my present

purpose to state, that the natural, and, I think, unavoidable conclusion which we had arrived at before, is exceedingly strengthened by the fact that it readily answers all the conditions of the question; whilst the contrary hypothesis, in order to appear in the least degree plausible, requires the utmost force of ingenuity and laboured criticism.

4. *This conclusion is capable of still further confirmation from the direction given to Cain, when he had failed to obtain the divine favour by his offering of the fruits of the ground.* God remonstrated with him on the unreasonableness of his resentment because his offering had not been accepted: "why," he was asked, "art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, *sin lieth at the door*." This latter part of the address, it will be seen, points out the nature of the sacrifice which Cain *ought* to have offered, and the only means which were still left him, of finding acceptance with God. The passage has been variously translated and interpreted by different commentators; but their conclusions I believe are reduced to three. The word *Chattath* (חטאת) it is agreed, means *primarily sin*. In a *secondary*

sense, it is allowed, that it is very frequently and properly translated *sin-offering*; and it is contended that it *may* also, in a secondary sense, be translated *punishment for sin*. It is between the application of it in one of these secondary senses, that the whole controversy really lies; because it seems to be mutually agreed, that in this passage, it cannot be understood in its primary sense, as simply meaning *sin*. This restricted sense of it would reduce the passage to such a truism, and such a tautology, as cannot, with reverence, be ascribed to God; for the remonstrance, in this case would be, "if thou doest not well," if thou sinnest, "sin lieth at the door." The only question then is, in which of the two secondary supposed senses it must here be taken. The advocates for the former of them fully concede, that if a single passage, in the Old Testament, can be adduced, in which the word must *necessarily* be taken in the sense of *punishment* for sin, then it *may possibly* be so construed in the passage before us. But after a minute and critical examination of every place where it occurs, it is shown, that in *not one* of them is that sense *necessarily* required: in each, it admits of either its simple and primary construction, or of the other secondary sense, of a *sin-offering*. As, therefore, in conceding the most, it is only

barely possible that *punishment for sin* may be a proper rendering of the term, this application of it cannot be admitted to settle the disputed passage, and particularly so, as the necessity of the case does not force us to this construction; for it is admitted on all hands, and is shown by very numerous passages of the Hebrew Scriptures, that it is often used, and must be used in the sense a *sin-offering*. The conclusion then is inevitable. It cannot be used in the simple sense of *sin;* it is never, with certainty, used as *punishment for sin*, and therefore cannot be pretended that it ought to be so taken here; and of course, as the only remaining alternative, it must be understood, in this place, as a *sin-offering*.[1]

The passage then, with this translation of CHATTATH, stands thus: if thou doest not well,

[1] I take no merit to myself for this criticism, inasmuch as it is only the condensed argument of Mr. Faber, extending through a most elaborate investigation of all the passages in which *Chattath* occurs. He appears to me to have proved his point, with a clearness of reasoning and weight of scriptural authority, which can neither be resisted nor evaded. And I am happy to have this opinion sanctioned, by an able review of his work in the British Critic and Theological Review. No. 5. pp. 77, 78. See *Faber's* "Treatise," &c. pp. 85—137.

a SIN-OFFERING lieth, or coucheth, at the door." But if this be the real sense of the passage, we have the authentication of God himself to ANIMAL SACRIFICE. He refers to it, as a thing well understood: as an institution which Cain had disregarded, and for the neglecting of which he had incurred the divine displeasure; and he is reminded that, if he would recover the lost favour, he must have recourse to a SIN-OFFERING, as the only sacrifice which, under his circumstances, God would accept at his hands.

On the expiatory quality of this sin-offering, I say nothing at present. I adduce the case here, merely to show that ANIMAL SACRIFICE received the approbation of the Almighty, and that he enjoined it upon Cain as the only offering he would accept at his hands. If this do not amount to an absolute proof of the divine origin of ANIMAL SACRIFICE, it comes as near to it as possible, since we find in the *first, and only* instance mentioned of it in the ante-diluvian world, it was received as an acceptable offering from Abel; the neglect of it, was visited by reproof of Cain; and the use of it was enjoined, as the only method of avoiding the penal consequences of sin.

5. We are brought to the same conclusion, with a force of evidence amounting, I should almost say, to demonstration, by *the account given of the offerings of Cain and Abel, by the inspired author of the epistle to the Hebrews.* "By *Faith*," says the apostle, "Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain."[2] The ground of this superiority, it appears, was *Faith.* Abel had a *faith*, which Cain had not, and on this account his animal sacrifice was accepted, and his brother's vegetable offering was rejected. If, therefore, we adhere to the definition which the inspired author himself has given of faith, in the immediately preceding context, we shall clearly ascertain the real cause of Abel's acceptance with God; and discover the true origin of animal sacrifice. "Faith," says the apostle, "is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen."[3] But "things hoped for," and "things not seen," cannot be matters of mere speculation, and unauthorized expectation; they must be subjects of divine testimony; matters which God has *revealed*, according to the declaration of St. Paul, "Faith comes by *hearing*, and hearing *by the* WORD OF GOD." The *foundation*, then, on which faith rests, is *divine revelation;* and the objects on which it fixes it-

[2] Heb. xi. 4. [3] Ver. 1.

self, are as various as the matters which are revealed. It is *one* in *principle*, but it is *multiplied* in *object*. The *principle* in this, as in all the other instances recorded in this chapter, is *divine revelation*. The specific subject, in this particular case, is *animal sacrifice;* and the revelation must necessarily relate to it. He believed what had been *revealed* respecting the kind of sacrifice which God would accept. Cain did not believe this; and therefore his offering was rejected, and his brother's sacrifice was accepted. If this reasoning be correct—and it appears to be incontrovertible—we are necessarily brought, by the authority of an inspired apostle, to the conclusion, that ANIMAL SACRIFICE was a subject of divine revelation, and therefore that it had its *origin* in *God*, and not in *man*."[4]

6. I add, finally, that *the universal practice of* ANIMAL SACRIFICE *in all ages, and in all parts of the world, before the Christian era, taken in connexion with the preceding account of Abel's sacrifice, attaches the highest degree of probability to the opinion that it was of divine origin.*

[4] See this argument ably insisted upon by Faber on *Expiatory Sacrifice*. pp. 138—145.

I assume the fact, conceded on all hands, of the universal practice of offering victims in religious worship in all heathen countries. Such a custom must have arisen either from the *common principles* of human nature operating according to one uniform law, and having the force of a moral sense; or from one *common source*, coeval with the parent family of the human race, and carrying along with it an authority from which there could be no appeal. That it is not a common dictate of our nature is, I think, too obvious to need proof. We may admit that possibly *some* individuals might have thought the offering of sensitive animals in sacrifice would be a likely way of propitiating the favour of their gods, and that their example might induce others to adopt the same practice; and that, hence, many nations might ultimately copy it. But this would, at most, be only a very partial and limited practice. It is impossible that it should have taken place in all nations, and become universal. There must have been many to whom the example would have been unknown; and more, who would have questioned the reasonableness of it, and refused to follow it. Besides, as I have before intimated, if it were a common suggestion of our nature, that this is a proper way of paying homage to the

supreme Being, it would have continued down to the present day, and formed an essential part of the Christian dispensation; for Christianity is a *reasonable* service, and precludes no *rational* way of cultivating the divine favour. We cannot therefore rank this universal practice of the Gentile world with those which nature and reason spontaneously suggest, and would render imperative on the whole of the human race. We have no alternative then but to ascribe it to one *common source*, and to an orginal authority from which there was no appeal. It could arise in no other way. Nor is it difficult to trace it to the fountain head. Immediately after the deluge, "Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar." Nor was he, any more than Abel, left without witness that his sacrifice was accepted, for "the Lord smelled a sweet savour," and immediately entered into a gracious covenant never again "to curse the ground for man's sake."[5] This would perpetuate the practice of animal sacrifice from his time, among all the generations which sprung from him in all their various emigrations and dispersions over the world, and satisfactorily account for the unanimous concurrence of all nations in this

[5] Gen. viii. 20, &c.

custom. The connexion between the sacrifice of Noah and that of Abel is obvious—they were both animal, and both received a token of the divine approbation: and admitting the divine institution of sacrifice, we have a solution, and the only solution which the case admits, of the acknowledged universality of animal sacrifices.

Each of these arguments, taken separately, makes a strong case in support of our hypothesis: and taken collectively, and in their close connexion with each other, they form a body of evidence which must, I presume, carry conviction to every candid mind that ANIMAL SACRIFICE IS OF DIVINE INSTITUTION.

Nor is it, I think, less clear

II. THAT ANIMAL SACRIFICE, FROM ITS FIRST APPOINTMENT, WAS EXPIATORY AND VICARIOUS.

It is denied, not only that animal sacrifice was at first of divine institution, but also, by some, that it was *originally*—and by others, that it was *ever piacular and vicarious*. The former conceive that reason might suggest that the offering of bloody victims would be a suitable way of expressing thanks to God for the blessings of his providence, or of deprecating his displeasure for

the commission of sin; yet that it could never have entered the mind of man to suppose that it would be accepted of God as an atonement for transgression. Hence they deny that animal sacrifice had this expiatory character before the dispensation of Moses; and maintain that it was invested, at this, for the first time, with a vicarious quality. "Having," says Mr. Davison, "gone thus far in showing that the *right*, and the *sense*, of animal sacrifice for sin, are not incapable of being explained, under its supposed *human origin;* its sense, I mean, as to the first condition of that kind of sacrifice; I come to its second condition, its expiatory atoning power, a character this, wholly distinct from the former, and of quite another order and import. The *guilt* of the worshipper is the subject of the first: the *remedy*, or the *remission* of his sin, the subject of the second.

"But here, instead of attempting to deduce the doctrine of expiation and atonement by animal sacrifice from the light of nature, or the principles of reason, I confess myself unable to comprehend, with the most ignorant, how it can be grounded on any such principles, or justified by them. There exists no discernible connexion between the one and the other. On the contrary, nature has nothing to say for such an expiatory power, and reason every thing to say against it.

——If, therefore, the primitive age had its expiatory sacrifices, sacrifices framed according to this standard, it would be difficult to account for them as rational rites; still more difficult to think that, under the palpable incapacity of their human origin, they could have been accepted by God. No: expiatory sacrifice must have been of God's own appointment, to reconcile it either to God, or to man himself, till he was fallen under a deplorable superstition." He then attempts to show that the sacrifices of the patriarchs had not this expiatory character, and that they did not assume it till the Mosaic economy. "Here then," he says, "in the Mosaic law, the declared expiatory power of sacrifice, of a certainty, begins. Here also commences the typical character of sacrifice, as a rite of *atonement*, on the stock of an *acknowledged institution*. From this stock, sacrifice bears its evidence, on solid grounds, and with unqualified force, to that which is the one conspicuous and unequivocal object of its typical character, the grace of the Christian Atonement. And as the *human* principle of *expiatory sacrifice* can never be vindicated at all, so the *divine* principle of it, in the Mosaic law, will never be explained to any purpose, with satisfaction to our reason, or with honour to the divine economy, except by its reference, as a preparatory rite,

and a prophetic sign, directed to its pre-ordained prototype in the evangelical dispensation."[6]

Socinians, however, go much further than this, and deny, in *all* cases, and at *all* times, the piacular and expiatory character of sacrifices; or that they have any reference whatever, either as a "preparatory rite, or a prophetic sign, directed to any pre-ordained prototype in the evangelical dispensation." "We can," say they, "discover nothing of them in the earliest times, but that they were offered as a tribute of gratitude, or an expression of dependence and subjection, and that their being accepted was regarded as a manifestation of approbation and favour. In later ages, they were considered as giving a religious sanction to covenants and engagements. This seems to be the whole of what can be known concerning them prior to the Jewish institution. ——Sacrifices and ceremonial worship had obtained general footing in the world, before they were established by divine institution, in the ministry of Moses. The design of the Mosaic economy was to separate Israel from the idolatrous nations, and preserve them from their idolatrous practices: to this purpose *the whole of their*

[7] Davison's Enquiry, &c. p. 27—33.

ritual service was directed. The designs of God were not at that time sufficiently ripened, nor the people prepared, for such a pure and spiritual worship as the gospel teaches: hence the sacrificature was imposed until the times of reformation, and the people were placed under such a state of things as was calculated to prepare them gradually for a more perfect economy." "It is evident that they (the Jewish sacrifices) were not vicarious, because they were not to be offered in any case when life was forfeited by the transgression of the law; consequently, not being vicarious themselves, they could not point to a vicarious sacrifice as their antitype." Expressions and reasonings of this kind abound among Socinian writers, and show that they consider animal sacrifice, in no case, expiatory, and never referable to the great atonement made on the cross for the sins of the world.

In opposition to both these opinions, I maintain

1. *That* ANIMAL SACRIFICES *were universally considered as* EXPIATORY *by the* HEATHEN WORLD; *and the fact can only be accounted for on the supposition that they were invested with that quality by God himself at their original institution.*

That these sacrifices were thus universally offered to pagan deities, under the notion that they would avert their wrath, or atone for offences, has been so abundantly shown by Archbishop Magee, in his "Discourses and Dissertations on the Scriptural Doctrines of Atonement and Sacrifice,"[8] that it is unnecessary to adduce any further evidence on the subject; and I shall assume it here as an undisputed fact. This expiatory quality of pagan sacrifices indeed was never questioned by those who adopted the views of Bishop Warburton and Mr. Davison: and the latter writer endeavours to account for it, as one of the suggestions, not of nature and reason, which he represents as disclaiming it, but of "a deplorable superstition," which invested the heathen deities with terror, and deemed the sacrifice of animals, or human victims, the only means by which their favour could be purchased, or their wrath averted. He has, however, as I conceive, entirely failed to establish this point. It is readily admitted that superstition has had re-

[8] See particularly of his Dissertations Nos. XXXIII. LVI. In reading these Dissertations, one feels at a loss which to admire most, the confidence with which Dr. Priestley has denied this notorious fact (Theological Repository, vol. 1, p. 400, &c.) or the patience and erudition with which the archbishop has demonstrated it.

course to many practices, which are equally abhorrent to nature and reason, and in her contrivances there is an endless diversity. Variety, indeed, is her peculiar characteristic, while that of nature and reason is uniformity. Had we therefore met with some insulated instances of this notion attached to animal sacrifice, we should have had no difficulty in tracing them to this source. But the facts before us are not partial, but universal; not the peculiarity of a few nations or ages, but the leading and distinctive feature of all people, languages, and times: and it is this uniformity in the character of heathen sacrifices that places them beyond the range of invention, or the caprice of superstition. Now, as it is denied that it could derive its origin from nature or reason,[9] we are shut up to the alternative, that it was invested with this expiatory quality by God himself. But in what way, it may be asked, can we trace pagan sacrifice to this divine origin? Evidently, by referring it to the common source, from which all the post-

9 "Instead of attempting to deduce the doctrine of Expiation and Atonement from the light of nature or the principles of reason, I confess myself unable to comprehend, with the most ignorant, how it can be grounded on any such principles, or be justified by them."—*Davison's* Inquiry into the Origin, &c. p. 27.

diluvian nations of the earth derived their existence—to the Patriarch Noah. He obtained it from his forefathers, and they from the primitive family. This, and this only, solves the whole difficulty of the case. If the Supreme Being instituted sacrifice, and instructed the parent family to offer victims as emblematical expiations of sin, then they would hand down the doctrine to their posterity, and thus it would be transmitted to Noah; and, through him, to all the nations of the earth, who sprung from him. Hence its universality, and hence the notion of its atoning character, when offered even to the gods of the heathen.

But that this was really the character originally stamped on animal sacrifice will appear, with additional evidence, if we consider the description given of these sacrifices antecedently to the Levitical dispensation; and I will therefore endeavour to show—

2. *That* ANIMAL SACRIFICE *was considered as* EXPIATORY *and* ATONING, *from the first that we have an account of as offered by Abel, down to the last of them as offered by Job, antecedently, as it is, probably, to the time of Moses.*

We have already seen, that the character given of Abel's sacrifice, and the directions given to Cain in what way he might repair the defect of his vegetable offering, establish the divine *origin* of sacrifice. But the facts of that case prove more. They show that animal sacrifice was to be viewed in the light of an *expiation* and *atonement*. I need not repeat what has already been advanced on the subject of these first sacrifices.[1] If the word rendered "Sin," must, in that statement,[2] as we have seen, been understood in its common and secondary sense as a *sin-offering;* and if that term, again and again occur in the Levitical rites, where it is acknowledged on all hands[3] that it is used to express an *expiatory* sacrifice, then it inevitably follows that, in the case of Cain's directed sacrifice, it could mean nothing less than that it was to have in it the quality of atonement. Now, not to dwell again on this fact as proving the divine origin of sacrifice, I adduce it here as incontestably showing that this character was appropriated to it by the Divine Being: for if, as Mr. Davison contends, this character of animal sacrifice could not have originated in the suggestion either of "nature or reason;" and if, in the present case, superstition is alto-

[1] pp. 115—120. [2] Genesis iv. 7. חטאת.

[3] Of course, in this argument, I except Socinians.

gether out of the question, then it was stamped upon it by God himself, and he alone can be the author both of the Institution, and the doctrine of the Atonement necessarily connected with it.

But the argument is further strengthened by the consideration that the account of this sacrifice is given by *Moses,* and was intended for the instruction of the people, whose religious services he was appointed to establish and explain. Now if, throughout the whole of the Levitical rites, a *sin-offering* was invariably expressive of an *atoning sacrifice,*[4] and the Jews so understood it wherever they met with the term, what construction must they naturally and necessarily have put upon it, when they read the account of the first sacrifice of Cain and Abel? It must obviously be that which they gave to it on every other occasion, and they could not avoid connecting with it the idea of expiation. Hence we see, from the first instance upon record of animal sacrifice, that it was impressed with

[4] "In the Hebrew language, the word, which we translate *Sin-offering* when used in its sacrificial sense, invariably denotes *Expiatory offering for sin,* agreeably to the strict definition of the term which has been given by Moses himself. Exod. xxx. 10. See also Exod. xxix. 36."—*Faber* on the Origin of Expiatory Sacrifice, p. 58.

the all-important character of an atonement for sin.

No further mention of animal sacrifice is made in the short narrative of the long period between the time of Abel and the deluge: and the next instance of it is the burnt-offerings of Noah, after God had caused a great wind to pass over the earth, and assuage the waters, and had stopped the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven. On this most affecting occasion, Noah came forth from his long confinement in the ark; and, with a heart deeply penetrated with the terrible example of a world in ruins for its transgressions,—with the dreadful wrath of God, as bursting forth against his enemies,—with the infinite goodness of his heavenly Father for the singular favour conferred on himself,—and, probably also with dread lest a similar catastrophe should again occur, he "builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings unto the Lord."

In the *terms* by which these *sacrifices, or burnt-offerings* are designated, nothing conclusive can be drawn as to their character, whether they were simply thanksgivings for the mercies he

had received, or whether they were intended to deprecate the divine wrath for the future, or whether both these ideas were combined. But the *facts* of the case will throw much light upon them; and these I have just stated, in order that we might place ourselves in Noah's situation, and thus excite feelings by which we should have been actuated in offering up the first solemn sacrifice, after such an eventful period since his last public service. Perhaps *gratitude* would be the first sensation; but this would be immediately followed by horror at the universal desolation which surrounded him, and dread lest so terrible a destruction should again visit the earth. In his sacrifice, then, he would unite thanksgiving and prayer: thanks for the past, and deprecation for the future: and his burnt-offerings, calculated as they were to express his sense of the evil of sin, and the only way in which its fearful consequences could be typically removed, would be associated with the desire that such calamities might hereafter be averted. The *facts* then of the case would naturally lead us to suppose that the character of his burnt-offerings would be chiefly *deprecatory*,—presented with the hope that God would cease from his displeasure.

But what may be only *probable* from the *circumstances* accommpanying the sacrifice, becomes *certain* from the *results* of it. We may arrive at a perfect knowledge of the *nature* of a sacrifice, if we can ascertain the *manner* in which it was accepted. The precise *purport* of a request may be discovered, when we get possession of the *answer* that was returned: that which might, before, in some degree, be vague and undefined, now is interpreted, and becomes clear and specific. What then was the answer of God to this sacrifice of Noah? "And the Lord smelled a sweet savour:" or, as others have, perhaps, more correctly rendered the Hebrew text, "the Lord smelled an odour of rest."[5] The burnt-offerings were grateful. They were accepted as deprecations of his wrath: they were presented with that view, and they had that effect. They were *an odour of placability:*[6] and that God would no more drown the world by the waters of a flood. "And the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth;

[5] "*Odoratus est Dominus odorem quietis:* hoc est, Qui antea commotus erat, quietus et placatus, Noachi sacrificio, reddebatur."—*Spencer*, de Leg. lib. iii.

[6] "Odorem placabilitatis;" according to the Syriac version, as adduced by Dr. Spencer ut supra.

neither will I again smite any more every living thing, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."[7]

Can any thing more clearly discover the predominant idea with which these burnt-offerings were presented, than this clear and definite result from them? That idea must have been deprecatory, because, immediately on these sacrifices being presented, God ceased from his displeasure, and entered into a covenant not to repeat the calamity with which he had recently visited the world.

It must not, however, be overlooked that sacrifices offered in the way of averting the divine anger against sin, may be of *two* kinds. They may be presented under the idea of *buying off this displeasure,* as gifts may be made to a judge, to conciliate his favour, and escape the infliction of a penalty. This was a very common idea connected with sacrifices in pagan nations;[8] but one which, in no way, can be looked upon by

[7] Gen. viii. 20—22.

[8] ———— "Qua tu *mercede*, Deorum
Emeris auriculas?" Pers. Sat. ii. See also Homer. Iliad. ix. 492, &c.

the Judge of all the earth, but with abhorrence. The Jews did, indeed, in their great degeneracy, seem to attach such a notion to their sacrifices and religious rites; and when they did so, they were rejected with indignation.[9] Whatever then might be the intention of *the person offering* a sacrifice, we are quite sure that it *never could be accepted by God as a bribe,* nor be followed by any token of his approbation. The fact, therefore, that Noah's sacrifice *was* divinely accepted and approved, renders it impossible that he could, in deprecating the future displeasure of God, have had the intention of offering a gift to pacify his wrath. There is then only one remaining way, in which, as a deprecatory sacrifice, his burnt-offerings could have been presented—and this is, as *expiatory and piacular.* If he did not intend it as a *bribe,* he *must* have intended it as an *atonement:* no other intention of a deprecatory sacrifice is possible.[1] If therefore God accepted it in this character, we have his approbation of expiatory sacrifices; and if he accepted it as such, he must first have *enjoined* it, for neither nature nor reason, says Mr. Davison, could have associated this quality with sacrifices; it must come from God; and we

[9] Isai. i. 10—15.

[1] See *Faber* on the Origin of Primitive Sacrifice, pp. 78—80.

have therefore again been brought to the conclusion, that not only was animal sacrifice originally of divine institution, but it was also by God invested with an atoning and expiating power.

The only remaining sacrifices which are distinctly detailed till the time of Moses, are those of Job; for though we read of the Patriarchs, and especially of Abraham, building altars, and offering victims, there is nothing minutely recorded from which we could come to any certain conclusion as to their peculiar character. I am aware that various opinions are entertained respecting both the period when Job lived, and the author to whom the book is to be ascribed. Nor is it necessary for me to go into this question on the present occasion, since the most accredited writers on this subject place Job among the Patriarchs; and the latest of the authors to whom, with any show of reason, it has been attributed is Moses.[2] And hence, upon any probable calculation of times, we are carried back to a period antecedent to the Levitical dispensation.

[2] For an account of the most recent opinions on this subject—vide Abp. Magee's Dissertations, No. LIX. Dr. Hales' Analys. vol. 2, p. 53. Dr. Mason Good's Translation. Introductory Dissertation, p. xlv.

Now, in the book of Job we have an account of two particular sacrifices; one at the commencement, and the other at the conclusion of it. The former is thus narrated. "His sons went, and feasted in their houses, every one his day: and sent and called for their three sisters, to eat and drink with them. And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be, that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually."[3] Of the nature and quality of these "burnt-offerings," nothing can be concluded with certainty from the *term* by which they are designated. But the *facts* of the case will elucidate both. The sacrifices were offered by the father in behalf of his sons, and that on the ground that in their festivity they might have offended God. This precludes the possibility of their being presented either as thank-offerings, or confessions of personal sin. They must therefore be ranked among those sacrifices, which were intended to deprecate the displeasure of the Almighty. And the only question which remains now to be considered is, whether Job

[3] Job i. 4, 5.

presented them as a *gift*, in order to *purchase* the divine forbearance with his sons, or as an *expiation*, to *atone* for their transgression, agreeably to the character of the sacrifices offered, as we have seen, by Noah, and before him by Abel. If the piety of Job forbid us to suppose the former, we must add this, as another instance of *piacular* sacrifices antecedent to the Mosaic dispensation; and as neither "nature nor reason" could suggest such a species of sacrifice, (and superstition is here out of the question,) we are driven to the conclusion that this character was originally stamped upon them by the Almighty himself. The remaining sacrifice, recorded at the conclusion of this extraordinary history, brings us, even with stronger evidence, to the same decision. "It was so," says the sacred historian, "that, after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, *My wrath is kindled against thee and against thy two friends;* for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore, take unto you seven bullocks, and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you; for him will I accept: *lest I deal with you after your folly*, in that ye have not spoken of

me the thing which is right, like my servant Job. So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, went and did according as the Lord commanded them: the Lord also accepted Job."[4]

Nothing can be more manifest than that here the sacrifices were to be deprecatory of the divine wrath; and the observations already made on the previous sacrifices are equally applicable here, and show that they were *expiatory*. But the case is much stronger here than in any of those which have preceded it: for we have, in this instance, God himself expressly *commanding* the atonement. In all the former we were compelled, by the very character of the offerings, to conclude that they were both piacular and of divine appointment; and in the case of Cain, we had all but demonstration, that it was commanded; but if any reason could be suggested for setting aside such an inference in the preceding cases, it must utterly fail here, since the *expiatory sacrifice is expressly enjoined* by God's authority. And I would still further remark, that if it should be alleged that, possibly, in the former instances, the pious Abel, Noah, and Job, might have offered their several victims in the

[4] Job xlii. 7—9.

mistaken notion that they could bribe the divine justice by offering a gift; and that God, in condescension to human infirmity, was pleased to accept of this well-meant but mistaken notion of the value of animal sacrifice—(a supposition which, if grounded on fact, would, after all, lead to the most fearful conclusions)—these allegations, in the present instance, must be entirely out of the question, seeing that God expressly *commanded* these burnt-offerings; and it is equally abhorent to common sense and piety to suppose, that the Judge of all the earth would enjoin upon his creatures the necessity of offering a gift to ward off a justly incurred penalty. As, therefore, this could be no other than a piacular and atoning sacrifice; and as it was offered before the Levitical priesthood, and was commanded and accepted by God himself, there can be no pretence for asserting that the doctrine of expiation of sin by sacrifices was first taught by Moses, after the giving of the law upon Mount Sinai:[5] and we are necessarily brought again to

[5] It has been said of the two sacrifices recorded in the book of Job, that they are instances of a "religion of worship and prayer, by sacrifice," by which it should seem as if it were meant to be inferred, that the benefit conferred was to be ascribed to the prayer, and the sacrifice to be considered only as an adjunct, calculated to give a suitable solemnity and im-

the conclusion that, *from the beginning, sacrifices were both piacular and of divine institution.*

We are now brought down to the Mosaic dispensation, when it is acknowledged by all, except by Socinians, that animal sacrifices were possessed of an expiatory and an atoning power: though it is contended by some, that it was not, till now, for the first time, that, in this character, they had either the authority or the express sanction of the Almighty. It is not necessary for my argument to attempt any further to refute this hypothesis; and to show that it would be extremely difficult to prove that, if sacrifices had not this high authority and expiatory power *be-*

portance to the ceremony. (Davison's Inquiry, &c. p. 190.) But, surely, this can never be seriously maintained against all that is said of Abel's sacrifice and Noah's burnt-offerings, when transferred, as it necessarily must be, to those before us. There must have been some *intrinsic meaning and intention of mind* in offering the *sacrifices*, as well as in the prayer: and that meaning is of such paramount importance, that, in comparison of it, the very mentioning of prayer is lost sight of in the two first of these cases. Now, what that *intention* was, we have already seen; and the additional fact, that intercession was added to sacrifice, only shows that the sacrifices of the Patriarchs had the nearest possible resemblance to that of their great Anti-type, who, after he had once offered himself to God for us, passed, as our Great High Priest, into the heavens; and there "ever liveth to make intercession for us."

fore the Mosaic economy, that they *now* received this sanction and superadded quality, for, on the face of the narrative, nothing seems clearer than that the customary character of animal sacrifice was carried into this new dispensation; and that it was merely made available to a variety of penalties, and appropriated to a multiplicity of cases, which had been created by the new state of things, and to which, of course, it had not previously had any relation. Nor is it necessary for me to point out the various objections which would lie against the notion that the ideas which superstition had first attached (for it is conceded that superstition among pagan nations had attached the notion of expiation to sacrifices long *before* the Levitical economy) to sacrifice, should be adopted into the system ultimately enjoined by God himself,—and in this way, not only allowing that superstition had anticipated God in his dispensation of mercy, but also that it had pointed out to him the very way of conferring it—all that was wanted, in addition to the admission of *all* orthodox writers that the expiatory power of animal sacrifice was fully recognized and established by the Mosaic ritual, was to show that this quality had *always* belonged to it, was originally stamped upon it by God himself, and was coeval with its first

institution. This having been done, we are now furnished with an unbroken chain of evidence, extending down from the primeval state, through both the Patriarchal and Levitical dispensations, to the advent of our blessed Lord, that piacular atonement constituted the very essence of religion; and that "without shedding of blood there was no remission" of sins.

But with this great fact before us, it is still necessary to enquire for what *kind* of offences these sacrifices were admitted as expiations and atonements. For, whilst some contend that they could not, in any case, be vicarious, because there were many transgressions for which the Mosaic sacrificature made no provision; others maintain that they were only possessed of this atoning power in matters relating to rites and ceremonies. Hence it has been *assumed,* as the foundation of an argument against the expiatory character of the patriarchal sacrifices, that in the Mosaic law provision was made only for ceremonial offences: "Since," says an eminent writer, "expiation for moral sin was not the privilege of the later dispensation, that of Moses—since atonement for all the greater instances of transgression, and even in the extent of man's ordinary obliquity of practice, was not included in the operation of the

Mosaic rites; had such an institute of atonement been granted, in the first period of things, to the primeval race, the divine economy would have been retrograde; a sacrament of grace and pardon would have been withdrawn; or, which is the same thing, it would have reduced from greater purposes to less; and all this is a change in the revealed ratification of the divine mercy, and the remedial provisions of the divine law—a change of disproportion in the appointment, and of loss and disfavour in the effect, which is highly inconsistent with our best notions of the progressive order of revealed religion, and with the actual evidences of that order contained in the general system of it."[6]

Hence, it is necessary to show,

3. *That* ANIMAL SACRIFICE, *both in the* PATRIARCHAL *and* LEVITICAL *dispensations, was expiatory of* MORAL TRANSGRESSION.

That part of this statement, which relates to the patriarchal economy, is so obviously true, that it scarcely requires any proof. It is, indeed, admitted as a necessary consequence of primeval

[6] Davison's "Inquiry into the Origin and Intent of Primitive Sacrifice," pp. 84, 85.

sacrifice being of divine institution, and of a piacular power; and a supposed absurdity of this conclusion is adduced, as we have first seen, against the probability of such a quality and origin really belonging to animal sacrifice. If these sacrifices were expiatory of any thing, it must have been of *moral transgression*, since only such, in the patriarchal age, was possible. Now, that they *were* expiatory, I trust, has been sufficiently evinced: and that they were expiatory of *moral transgression*, and of that alone, is an inevitable consequence; but so far from shrinking from the conclusion to which we are thus brought; or fearing that we shall be reduced to the dilemma of *retrograding* in the dispensation of mercy, I wish to give all the distinctness possible to the fact that *animal sacrifice was, from the beginning, expiatory of* MORAL OFFENCES, AND OF THOSE ONLY; *and that, wherever it has diverged to other objects, it has been in the way of accommodation—has been incidental, temporary, and extraneous.* THE GREAT AFFAIR, upon which it had an aspect, from the very commencement, and of which it never for a moment lost sight, was the atonement for SIN; and that not *ceremonial*, but MORAL. Strange indeed would it have been, if, when the conscience of our great progenitors were burdened with guilt, and their

minds were trembling under the apprehension of its fearful consequences; and when, in this pitiable condition, the Father of mercies intimated his intention of repairing this dreadful evil, and for this purpose directed them to animal sacrifice as the medium by which he might at all times be approached and propitiated, strange indeed would it have been, if he had made no provision for the expiation of MORAL TRANSGRESSION. This was the *only* thing they wanted; and to have omitted this would have been to mock their hopes, and to leave them poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked. No: the whole system of revelation was intended to develop this grand mystery of redemption by the blood of the cross. The development was slow and gradual. Each succeeding dispensation brought something more to light respecting it, and made some new discovery of the way and greatness of this salvation. Patriarchs saw it at a distance, and rejoiced. It was the high privilege of Priests and Levites to be every day familiarized with the emblems of it, both in their religious and political offices. Poets, under a divine afflatus, sung of its glories and the future achievements of the Great Deliverer: and Prophets, as the time drew nigh, were permitted, in vision, to behold the day of the Son of Man, and to gaze on the Sun of

Righteousness. In all this, there was a regular progression from the first promise, that "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head;" but it was a progression in the unfolding of a *principle,* which had been made known from the *beginning;* and that *principle* was nothing less than that, in some way or other to them yet unknown, by some great agent of God's providing, of whom, probably, they had no clear conception, the moral trangressions of man should be expiated, and their penal consequences finally averted. This great principle was emblematized in animal sacrifice. In reference to it, Abel offered a better sacrifice than Cain; Noah brought down the Divine blessing on the renewed earth; the pagan world, forgetting the true God, propitiated their deities; Job offered burnt-offerings for his sons, and presented his intercession with the sacrifice of his friends, and thus averted the wrath which their frowardness had excited. The same principle pervaded the Levitical services. The great days of Atonement fixed all eyes and hearts upon it;—the morning and evening sacrifices kept it in almost hourly remembrance;—the ceremony of the scape-goat represented it as in a drama;—and the very peculiarities of the Mosaic dispensation, its rites, and ceremonies, and political usages, exhibited it not only on every occasion, but in almost every

variety of form. In this there was no retrogression, no privation of a sacrament, nothing that indicated the least intermission in carrying into effect the purposes of divine mercy to man; but every thing advanced, till the whole was consummated, and the blessed Saviour poured a flood of light upon life and immortality by the gospel.[7]

But it is proper to give somewhat more of distinctness to these topics; and to notice the *effects* of expiatory sacrifice on the relative condition of those who offered it, both as it regards God and man. Did it affect them in *both* these relations, or only in the *former?* This question resolves itself into another: *What were the penal evils,* from which expiatory sacrifice exempted the offerer? Were they temporal or spiritual? Did they relate to civil institutions, or the divine government? or to both?

In order to answer these questions correctly, we must distinguish between the primary and secondary objects of expiatory sacrifice; between what it was intended, at its first institution to effect, and to what it was made applicable, in the progress of God's dispensations with man; be-

[7] Τοῦ Σωτῆρος——φωτίσαντος ζωὴν. κ. τ. λ. 2 Tim. i. 10.

tween what inherently belonged to it, and what was superinduced by local and adventitious institutions. For want of always keeping these obvious distinctions in view, much confusion, as it appears to me, has attended the discussion of animal sacrifice; and I cannot but think that most of the difficulties with which it has been embarrassed, might have been removed by carefully considering what was its *original* design; and what, in process of time, has been *engrafted* upon it.

It is agreed, as we have seen, that if expiatory sacrifice were offered before the Levitical dispensation, it must have been for *moral* transgression, as no other could then have existed: and that expiatory sacrifice *was* offered from the beginning, after what has been said, I have a right now to assume. The *penal consequences*, therefore, which were removed by it, must, like the transgression, be *moral* and not *civil;* spiritual and not temporal; relating to the future and not to the present world. "The wages of sin were death;" the expiation of sin, therefore, must be followed by life. That this was not a temporal, but spiritual life, is obvious from the fact, that no atonement, no expiation for sin, was ever allowed to arrest the arm of death.

That the exemption is purely of the kind just described, is evident both from the fact that Abel's sacrifice did not exempt him from temporal death, and from the very nature of things, which must be changed, by a perpetual miracle, if the natural course of temporal good or evil were made dependent on the offering of such sacrifices. In the case of the first animal sacrifice, of which any account is given, we find that it was immediately followed by temporal death; for Cain, out of envy of the success of his brother's offering, slew him. Hence, if it had been originally the intention of sacrifice to remove the penalty of *temporal* death, or to interfere with the ordinary course of human conduct, or political institutions, Abel's sacrifice would have utterly failed of its purpose; and Cain would, in respect of the things of this life, have had greatly the advantage over his more righteous brother. But, viewing the expiatory sacrifice of Abel as relating entirely to transactions of a moral nature between God and himself, and regarding solely God's distribution of good and evil, in the future world, every thing is plain, consistent, and satisfactory.[8]

[8] I cannot omit this opportunity of expressing the conviction which this case brings to my mind, of the *knowledge* which the first family had of a *future state of existence*. Supposing the absence of this knowledge, to what a state of doubt, and anxiety, and distress,—yea, and of temptation, to cast away

Abel was accepted of his God. His premature and violent death was, humanly speaking, a contingency, a result of the ordinary effect of the evil workings of a wicked disposition in his brother, which could not have been averted without a preternatural interference with the usual course of human nature; an interposition which, in the

the fear of God, must this catastrophe, resulting from Abel's piety and the divine approbation of it, have reduced all who knew, or afterwards heard of it? Having no idea of any state beyond the present, in which such characters as Abel might hope for a more equable distribution of good and evil, the conclusion would be inevitable, that the condition of the wicked was preferable to that of the righteous; and that no protection or advantage was to be derived from God by a dutiful and affectionate obedience to his will. "Here," they would naturally say, "is the pious Abel utterly cut off from life and its enjoyments, and perished for ever, and that for the very act of a religious observance, of which God had expressed his open approbation; and there is Cain, whom God has rejected for his impiety and disobedience, after the commission of the most horrible deed, preserved in life, and a mark is set upon him to protect him from violence! Surely it is worse than in vain to serve God; the wicked are the men whose life is preserved, and who triumph in their sin." What an overwhelming discouragement must this have been to the righteous; and what a floodgate must it have opened to the commission of sin! Admit, however, the primeval knowledge of a future state of rewards and punishments, and every thing at once appears in its true light.

present case, it should seem, was not an object of sufficient importance to justify a suspension of the ordinary connexion between cause and effect. But the *great* point was secured. The penalty of sin was removed. God was well pleased with the sacrifice, and "an entrance was ministered unto him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom."

This, then, was the great benefit resulting from piacular and atoning sacrifices. They interposed between the sinner and his Judge. They averted the infliction of the penalty of transgression, not as a civil offence committed against the order of society,—with this they had nothing to do; civil government is upheld by other sanctions and other penalties;—not as violations of ritual and ceremonial institutions,—these had then no existence;—but as sins against God. They re-instated the sinner in his favour, as though he had never offended; and they secured to him all the spiritual and eternal blessings which would have followed a life of uninterrupted obedience.

We have here, also, a clear view of the *vicarious* import of sacrifice. The victim was the substitute of the sinner. The penalty was, in figure, transferred from the latter to the former.

God accepted the transfer; and the guilty was acquitted as though he had been innocent, according to the significant description given of the ceremony in later times, when the believer "put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering, and it was accepted for him, to make ATONEMENT for him."[9]

This also explains the superior excellence of Abel's above his brother's offering, as proceeding, according to St. Paul's account of it, from faith.[1] There was no intrinsic value in his sacrifice. It derived its entire worth from the object to which it was referred, and from the disposition of mind with which it was offered. It proceeded from an implicit acquiescence in the divine appointment, and an assured belief that it was connected, though in what way he probably had no distinct conception, with some great Deliverer, hereafter to appear in the world, who should "take away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

It carries us, also, through the whole period of sacrificature, to the actual suspension of the Supreme Victim, of which all others were but types and shadows, on the accursed tree, for the

[9] Levit. i. 4. [1] Heb. ii. 4.

redemption of the world; and the whole mystery of sacrifice was fully developed, and an "everlasting righteousness was brought in, which was upon all and unto all them that believe." Here we learn the great design of the sacrifice on the great days of atonement; of the singular ceremony of the scape-goat; of the daily sacrifice at the morning and evening service of the Temple. In all these cases the sacrifices were expiatory. When offered in faith, as Abel's was, they took away sin. They averted its penalty. They brought down the divine blessing. They gave a title to an eternal inheritance. But they did nothing more. They did not interfere with human governments. They did not intercept the hand of civil justice. They did not ward off the temporal evils of sin; nor reinstate the political offender in his former condition in life. They had no reference whatever to these things. They were, as we have seen, of a perfectly different character; and human affairs proceeded as if there had been no provision whatever for the moral and penal consequences of sin. *Nor has the Atonement of Jesus Christ made the least alteration in this respect.* It has nothing to do with human governments, or penal statutes, or the ordinary course of temporal events. They proceed just as if no such atonements had been made: and the

political offender, if I may so speak, now stands in the same relation to the penalties of human laws as he always did; and suffers for his offences as others do; though, in his relation to God, through faith in the blood of the Atonement, he may be pardoned, justified, and made eternally happy.

This, then, is the state of things as it at first existed in its simplest form in the patriarchal ages; as it existed also in the Levitical dispensation, but in a more complex manner; and as it still exists, in the anti-type, in the economy under which we now live.

I said, "as it existed in the Levitical dispensation, but in *a more complex manner;*" and this is the point to which our attention is now particularly called. The Mosaic economy is a *distinct case.* It has many things in common with what preceded and followed it, but it has some things peculiar. It retained the original institution of sacrifice, with all the qualities which belonged to it. These were still prominent, fundamental, and the substratum on which the whole system was built.[2]

[2] "It is a remarkable circumstance, which I think," says Mr. Faber, "has not been sufficiently attended to by Mr. Davi-

But other things were *superadded* and *engrafted* upon it, which gave it, in some respects, a new

son, that the rite of sacrifice is introduced into the law of Moses, not as if it were an ordinance then, *for the first time*, appointed by God, but as if it were an institution *already* familiar to the people in consequence of some well-known ancient precept: and it is also a remarkable circumstance, that every sacrificial command under the law respects exclusively the *mode* and *occasion* of sacrifice, while *the observance of the naked rite itself* is never once independently and abstractedly enjoined. The law, in short, *recognizes* and *modifies* the rite; but no where, so far as I know, does it enjoin *the observance of the naked rite itself* under the aspect of a then first promulgated divine institution.

"Taking this view of the question, we shall find, that the exordium of the book of Leviticus, where, with a reference to the law, the ordinance of sacrifice begins to be regularly discussed, well deserves our most serious attention. In that portion of holy writ, no COMMAND to sacrifice to the Lord their God is laid upon the Israelites, as if hitherto they had sacrificed *independently* of any divine command, and as if now, at length, they were to begin to sacrifice in *pursuance* of a divine command; but a form of speech is adopted, through no less than three entire chapters, which seems not obscurely to imply, that a divine command to that purpose was universally known to have been long since in actual existence."—*Faber* on Expiatory Sacrifice, pp. 155—157.

Again: "Throughout the whole code of the Mosaic law, *the bare rite itself* is never once explicitly commanded. This matter is not a little remarkable, though it has been altogether overlooked by Mr. Davison. He strenuously contends, that,

aspect, and which require a distinct consideration. It is then what was *peculiar* to this dispensation, and not what it had *in common* with the former, that we have now to notice.

In this singular economy, the Supreme Being connected himself with his favoured people in a new character. He placed himself at the head of their civil government, and thus constituted it a theocracy. In this way the Hebrew nation became *doubly* responsible to him,—first as the original and supreme Governor of the world, administering its affairs by his providence and grace; and awarding, as the sanction of his universal

as *the divine institution of sacrifice* is no where mentioned under patriarchism, so we find it for the first time expressly mentioned under the law. Here lies his error. So far from his statement being accurate, its terms ought to have been exactly inverted. Under patriarchism, *the divine institution of sacrifice* is distinctly referred to in the history of Cain and Abel: but, under the law it no where appears. Much, under the law, is said as to the *regulation* of sacrifice; and commands to *this* purpose are recorded with a copious minuteness: but we are no where told, that, under the law, the naked *rite* of sacrifice was first divinely instituted. Throughout the whole code of Moses, its *previous existence* is assumed as a *substratum*. The law professes to do nothing more, than *regulate* and *modify* a very ancient divine institution of patriarchism."—*Ibid.* pp. 159, 160.

laws, rewards and punishments, agreeably to the light and privileges which he had conferred upon them; and it was in this relation to Him, that they were required to offer the sacrifices of which we have been hitherto speaking, conformably to his original institution. But they were now placed in a *new* relation to Him, as their *civil* and *political* head; and, in this character, they owed him duties corresponding with his government as their national king. These duties also were enforced by sanctions peculiar to their civil polity; and are never to be confounded with those which previously existed under the patriarchal dispensation. They might, and probably would, in many respects, resemble each other: they might consist of penal and expiatory offerings: they might require the same functions in their priests: they might be presented in the same Temple: and they might be offered to the same Supreme Being: but still they were widely and essentially different, both in the relation they bore to the moral conduct of the persons who offered them, the relative character of Him to whom they were presented, and the special object for which they were designed. Irrespective of their political obligations, they were previously bound to offer sacrifices for the expiation of their moral offences; and no change whatever took place in this re-

spect.[3] Their animal victims would still, on particular and proper occasions, have regard to moral transgressions, and those only: but on others, they would have a reference to the peculiar polity of their nation, and be presented under the directions and limitations which that polity prescribed. The same course of conduct, viewed in relation to these different authorities, would have a twofold aspect, and would require a twofold treatment. Moral offences, when they became also state offences, might admit of no expiation, and no substitution for personal suffering; and yet, as they regarded the Supreme Government, and as incurring the original penalty of sin, they might, through the medium of vicarious sacrifices, be entirely blotted out; and whilst, under the theocracy, the offender could not escape death, under the general dispensation, he might be made a partaker of endless life. Nor is there any thing mysterious or paradoxical in this diversity of treatment. It is one of daily occurrence; and

[3] "This people," (the Jews,) says the author of the *Scripture Account of Sacrifices*, "as to their inward state, were doubtless under the same control, both of the law of nature and of the divine providence, as they were before the law; this having introduced no change in this respect. They were consequently entitled to the pardon of *all* their sins, of what nature soever, upon the same terms as before." p. 168.

nothing is more common than for a judge to exhort a criminal to seek that mercy at the throne of God, which it is impossible he should receive at an earthly tribunal. The only difference between the two cases is, that God was the constituted head both of the moral and political government of the one; and of the moral government alone of the other. But this does not alter the nature of things. It might be as inexpedient to admit an expiatory sacrifice to remove the penalty of a crime, which demanded the death of the offender, in the peculiar government of the Jewish nation, as it would be to allow a pecuniary commutation of penalty for a similar offence in ordinary cases.[4] Hence we find many crimes, in the Levitical dispensation, which admitted of no vica-

[4] I have avoided entering into the question whether the sacrifices of the Levitical priesthood were ever permitted to arrest the penalty of death, when threatened in the Mosaic law, as not being essential to my argument. I may, however, add, that, even in the *political* peculiarity of this dispensation, many offences were exempted by atonement, which would otherwise have been visited by the forfeiture of life. (See Levit. vi. 3; also v. 4.) Indeed it would seem that such was the severity of the penal enactments of this law, that *all* offences exposed the offender to the punishment of death; and that whenever the penalty was remitted, it was solely on the ground of sacrifice. (See Deut. xxvii. 26. Ezek. xviii. 19—23. Gal. iii. 10. James ii. 10.)

rious expiation. The offender was amenable, in his own person, to the injured laws of his country, and neither wealth nor sacrifices could ward off the stroke of justice.

It is this distinction between the moral and political government of the Jews that obviates the Socinian objection against vicarious sacrifices, founded on the fact, that there were many cases of crime for which the Levitical economy admitted no atonement. It was not as offences committed against the moral Governor of the world, but against the political state of which God was the representative, that they were excluded from the benefit of piacular expiation. There were *no* cases exempted from atonement, in the former relation; there might be *many* that were excluded, in the latter: and as the argument for piacular and vicarious atonements is founded, not on what was peculiar to the Jewish nation as a theocracy, but on what it had in common with the patriarchal age—derived from the original institution of sacrifice in the primeval state—introduced, with fresh sanctions and enlarged extent, into the Levitical dispensation—celebrated with greater frequency and more imposing ceremony in the Temple service, and on appointed festivals, and interwoven

with all the peculiar rites of this holy nation—the objection falls at once to the ground. It arises out of a mistaken notion that what was *peculiar* to the *political* state of the Jews, might be applied as an argument against the *general* character of atonements, as having place in the moral government of God.[5]

[5] In offering this obvious solution of the objection above stated, I am far from either forgetting or undervaluing the able refutation of it by Archbishop Magee; and I should think it an injustice to my readers to deny them the satisfaction of reading it in my pages. In answering the argument that "sacrifice could not have implied any thing vicarious, as an atonement could not be made where life was forfeited,"—the archbishop replies, "There is no argument advanced by the opponents of the doctrine of Atonement, with greater confidence than this; and there is none which abounds with greater fallacies. It is untrue, in point of fact; it is sophistical, in point of reasoning; and it is impertinent, in point of application.

1. It is untrue; for atonements *were* made in cases, when, *without atonement,* life was forfeited. This appears at once, from the passage of Leviticus last referred to; (xvii. 11.) which positively asserts the atonement to be made for the *life* of the offerer: it also appears from the unbending rigour of the law in general, which seems to have denounced death against every violation of it. (See Deut. xxvii. 26. Ezek. viii. 19—23. Gal. iii. 10. James ii. 10,) and, in particular, from those specific cases, of *perjury* (Levit. vi. 3.) and of *pro-*

This view of the subject also obviates the objection against the divine institution of expiatory sa-

fane swearing (v. 4.) for which atonements were appointed, notwithstanding the strict sentence of the law was death (Exod. xx. 7.—and Levit. xxiv. 16.)

2. It is sophistical; for, from the circumstance of atonement not being appointed in those cases in which death was peremptorily denounced, it is inferred, that no atonement could be made where life was forfeited; whereas the true statement of the proposition evidently is, that life was forfeited where no atonement was permitted to be made. It is true, indeed, that death is not expressly denounced in those cases in which atonements were allowed; but this was *because* the atonement was permitted to arrest the sentence of the law, as appears particularly from this—that where the prescribed atonement was not made, the law, no longer suspended in its natural operation, pronounced the sentence of death. The real nature of the case seems to be this: the rigid tendency of the law being to secure obedience, on pain of forfeiture of life; all such offences, as were of so aggravated a kind as to preclude forgiveness, were left under the original sentence of the law, whilst such as were attended with circumstances of mitigation, were forgiven on the condition of a public and humble acknowledgment of the offence, by complying with certain prescribed modes of atonement. It should be remembered also, that the law was not given at different times, so as that its denunciations and atonements should be promulgated at different periods; both were announced at the same time, and therefore in such cases as admitted of pardon, the penalty being superseded by the atonement, the punishment strictly due to the offence is consequently not denounced, and can only be collected now from the general tendency of

crifice in the primeval state, grounded on the supposition that that privilege was denied to the Mosaic dispensation; and that thus "the divine economy would have been retrograde; a sacrament of grace and pardon would have been withdrawn."[6] It is evident that nothing in the *nature* of expiatory sacrifice for moral transgressions, *as committed against God, in his character of universal Governor,* was either added or taken away by the Mosaic dispensation. The

the law, from some collateral bearings of the Mosaic code, or from the inflictions which actually followed on the neglect of the atonement. The whole strength of the present objection rests upon this: that we have not both the atonement prescribed, and the punishment denounced: that is, the punishment both remitted and denounced at the same time.

But I have dwelt too long upon this; especially when

3. The whole argument is inapplicable. For even they who hold the doctrine of vicarious *punishment,* feel it not necessary to contend, that the evil inflicted on the victim, should be exactly the same in quality and degree, with that denounced against the offender: it depending, they say, upon the will of the legislator, what satisfaction he will accept in place of the punishment of the offender. (See Outram de Sacri, lib. i. cap. xxi. § 1, 2—9.) But still less will this argument apply, where vicarious *punishment* is not contended for, but merely as an emblematical substitute, the result of institution, and which, in no respect, involves the notion of an equivalent." No. xxxviii. vol. 1, p. 358—361.

[6] Davison's Inquiry, &c. p. 85.

previous system, whatever it was, was still continued; and to this was *superadded* the application of sacrifice to the theo-political state of the Jews. The different *degrees* of crime, to which it was rendered subsidiary, related to the *theocracy*. The *exempt* cases were moral offences against the *state*, or against God, as the *political* head of that state. Expiation, to the full extent of *all* moral delinquencies against the *Judge of the whole earth*, was as attainable under this economy, as under the Patriarchal; and the devout penitent, looking through the type, to the promise, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, of which the sacrifice was a symbol, obtained remission of his sins. On the great day of atonement, at the morning and evening sacrifices of the temple, and on other special occasions, the *moral* offences of the faithful were the chief, if not the only objects, that fell within the scope and design of the sacrifices: and these, like "the blood of Jesus Christ, cleansed from all sin." The apostle considered this point so clearly established, that he grounded upon it an argument for the necessity of having a priest more perfect and more enduring than those appointed under the temporary dispensation of the law, who should preside over the church of God for ever: "For such an

high priest," says he, "became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, *to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and for the peoples;* for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests, which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."[7]

Here then is no retrogradation, no withdrawing a sacrament, no deterioration in the condition of God's favoured people. On the contrary, there is an accession of privilege, an increase of expiatory sacrifices, applicable not only to the pardon of all moral offences against God, but also to many, that were of an aggravated nature, against their theocracy. Their sacrifices were multiplied. An order of men was instituted to take the sole charge of administering them. A tabernacle, and afterwards a splendid temple, was built for drawing to them a more public and solemn attention; the ceremonies with which they should be offered were minutely described; the very utensils, which were requisite for the due performance of them, were themselves purified by sacri-

[7] Heb. vii. 26—28.

fice, and even the daily intercourse of life, as well as every transaction of a public and national nature, was inseparably connected with them. Here then we see the plan of divine mercy to man progressively developed. The idea of expiation by sacrifice was continually presenting itself. Not even a political offence could be pardoned, without a recognition of the principle; and while the humble penitent obtained, through faith in these typical sacrifices, the forgiveness of all his sins, even the careless and profligate learned that there could be no exemption from the temporal penalties of his offences, but in virtue of expiatory sacrifice; so that, whether politically or morally, "without shedding of blood, there was no remission" of sin.

This view of the subject, finally, places in its true light *the general law of God*, as distinguished from *that of Moses* and shows that expiatory sacrifice has a *primary* reference to the former, and is *superinduced* on the latter. In certain respects, indeed, the universal and Levitical law are the same. The moral decalogue must be in perfect harmony with every revelation of the divine will to man, as being grounded on the eternal nature and fitness of things: and as it was the expiation of *moral* offences, to which

sacrifice, in its original institution, was exclusively directed, it comes in, with equal propriety and effect, to the atonement of *moral* offences under the latter dispensation; and is, therefore, sometimes referred to the penalty of transgression denounced in the Mosaic law, as though this were its exclusive object; as, for instance, when it is said, "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." But it it is manifest, that it is to the *moral* law of Moses, as re-enacting the *general* law of God's government, that we are to understand such passages as applicable; and this is remarkably evident from the connexion in which the words just recited stand; for the apostle has regard to the faith of *Abraham* long before the giving of the law, in the whole of this chapter, and adduces it to show that both Jews and Gentiles were eventually to be saved in one common way: "The scripture, says he, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall *all* nations be blessed." Then follow the passages just quoted; and they are adduced to show that Christ hath

redeemed *all*, both Jew and Gentile, from the curse of the law.[8] Every thing in the law was calculated to direct the minds of men to the great atonement. The whole system was an instructive lesson on the nature of the great expiation. This law admitted of no breach without incurring a penalty. No penalty was remitted but in reference to an atonement; and as all had repeatedly "sinned and come short of the glory of God," all were under a curse; and it being "impossible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin," "Christ redeemed all from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them." This is the obvious import of such passages as the above; and they can never be *restricted* to the law of Moses, as placed in opposition to God's universal law, without offering violence to the reasoning of the apostle, and being placed in array against the analogy of faith.

It is, therefore, insinuated without the least foundation in fact, that redemption from the curse of the law by Jesus Christ, means only, that he introduced a new dispensation, which exempted men from the burdensome rites of the Levitical priesthood; and that it has no regard to the *general* law under which the rest of the

[8] Gal. iii.

world lived, nor that under which we, as Christians, now live. The fact is, it is from the *original* penalty connected with a breach of God's moral law, and which was re-published, with additional ceremony, on Mount Sinai, that expiatory sacrifice at first released the transgressor; and it was for violations of the same law, under the Mosaic dispensation, that they retained their original character, though they were also made subservient, for special purposes, to the political administration of the Jewish theocracy. This however was the *accommodation;* the former, *the intention.*

I have only to add—

4. That ANIMAL SACRIFICE, thus shown to be divine in its institution, expiatory in its quality, and extending its power to moral transgressions, *was also strictly* VICARIOUS. *The life of the animal* was offered as a substitute for the life of the offender.

It is contended, as we have seen, that "animal sacrifice could not be *vicarious*, because, in certain cases where life was forfeited, it was not permitted to arrest the course of justice." This objection, however, has been shown to be

grounded on a mistaken notion of the facts of the case. Animal sacrifice, both in its original institution, and through the whole course of its application, both in the Patriarchal and Levitical dispensations, down to the time of Christ, when it was superseded, was offered as an atonement for all moral offences against God as the universal king: and although in the Mosaic legislation, it was not permitted to remove the penalties of all[9] such offences against the theocracy, as endangered the state, yet in *all* cases, where it *was* prescribed, it was *vicarious*. The death of the victim was *always* substituted for that of the offender. If an offence were committed against God, it incurred the penalty of death, as "the wages of sin." If committed against the state, it incurred the forfeiture of life, under the appellation of the "curse" denounced against those "who continued not in all things, written in the book of the law to do them;" and the victim slain in sacrifice, when offered up in the prescribed form, and with the requisite moral

[9] I say "in *all* such offences;" for in several instances of great offences against the state, such as perjury, theft, breach of trust, &c. the penalty of death was permitted to be arrested by atonement and sacrifice. See Levit. vi. 1—7. Exod. xxii. 1, &c.—"On the efficacy of the Mosaic Atonement, applied to cases of moral transgression," See Magee, No. xxxvii. vol. 1, p. 333.

disposition of mind, arrested the course of divine or political justice, (as the case might be,) and exempted the offender from the penalty.

That the idea that victims offered in sacrifice would be accepted in the place of those who had offended, prevailed from the earliest times, is evident from the fact that, long before the giving of the law, the custom of offering *human* sacrifices to false gods had become inveterate among heathen nations. This was the crying sin of the Phenicians and Canaanites, at the time of the Exodus; and was the occasion of their being cast out of their land before the Israelites, who were cautioned against falling into the same offence, lest in their turn they also should be ejected from the promised land. "Thou shalt not let any of thy seed," says God to Israel, "pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God.—Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things; for in all these, the nations are defiled which I cast out before you.—Ye shall therefore not commit any of these abominations—that the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you."[1] Now that the

[1] Levit. xviii. 21—28. See also xx. 1—5.

notion connected with human sacrifices[2] was *piacular* and *vicarious*, is most evident from the reference which the prophet Micah makes to the horrid practice, when he asks, "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? *Shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul.?*"[3] Nothing can be clearer than that here an *expiatory substitution* is the predominant idea, and that alone upon which a personal exemption from death is founded. It is true, indeed, that the question is only proposed in order to be rejected; but it is also true, that the opinion connected with sacrifice was that it was vicarious; and this instance of substitution was rejected, because human victims were forbidden, and held in abhorrence of God. This was the abuse of a doctrine which had been handed down from the Patriarchal age; and is of

[2] For evidence of the *universal* prevalence of human sacrifices, see Archbishop Magee, No. V. p. 96—129, and the *fact* is as extensive as the victims offered up, that *every where* the idea prevailed that the gods could only be appeased by atonements. "Regem ipsum, velut *iræ cælestis piaculum*, immolabant."

Mos fuit in populis, quos condidit advena Dido,
Poscere cæde Deos veniam, ac flagrantibus aris
(Infandum dictu) parvos imponere natos.

Sil. Italic. 4.

[3] Micah vi. 6. 7.

itself a proof of the universal prevalence of the *principle* of vicarious sacrifice. The *principle* was of *divine institution;* the *abuse* of it, of *man's corruption.*

It is in this way only that we can satisfactorily explain the numerous descriptions given of the atonement in the Levitical law: as when it is said, "he shall *put his hand on the head* of the burnt-offering, and it *shall be accepted for him, to make atonement for him.*[3] And the priest shall make an *atonement* for them, and it shall be *forgiven them.*[4] The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar, *to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*"[5] But, perhaps, of all others, the ceremony of the scape-goat, connected with the sacrifice of atonement, conveys the clearest notion of the vicarious import of sacrifice. Aaron "shall take," as he was divinely instructed, "of the congregation of the children of Israel, *two kids of the goats for a sin-offering,*—and he shall take the two goats, and present them before the Lord,—and shall cast lots upon the goats: one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scape-goat. And Aaron shall bring the goat, upon

[3] Levit. i. 4. [4] iv. 20. [5] xvii. 11.

which the Lord's lot fell, and offer him for a sin-offering. But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scape-goat, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scape-goat into the wilderness.——Then shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering that is for the people, and bring the blood within the vail, and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat;—and he shall bring the live goat: and Aaron shall *lay both his hands upon the head* of the live goat, and *confess over him* ALL *the iniquities of the children of Israel, and* ALL *their transgressions in* ALL *their sin,* PUTTING THEM ON THE HEAD OF THE GOAT, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: and THE GOAT SHALL BEAR UPON HIM ALL THEIR INIQUITIES INTO A LAND NOT INHABITED: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness."[6] Here then we have two animals constituting *one* sacrifice.[7] On the head of one

[6] Levit. xvi. 5—22.

[7] "On this," says Archbishop Magee, "see what has been said in pp. 370, 371, of vol. 1, and attend particularly to the 5th, 7th, and 10th verses of Levit. xvi. from which it appears that the *two goats* are, throughout the chapter, spoken of as *one* sin-offering; being expressly so *called* in the first of these verses; presented *jointly* as the offering of the people in the second: and though separated into two distinct *parts*, by the lot cast in the 9th verse, yet *each* described as contributing to

of them, the high priest places his hands, and confesses the sins of the people, with all their aggravations,—or as it is expressed, "ALL THE INIQUITIES OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, AND ALL THEIR TRANSGRESSIONS, IN ALL THEIR SINS"—(surely not their *political*, but their *moral* delinquencies,—at least, these must be included.) One of the goats is killed, and the other, on which the sins were confessed, is then led "into the wilderness—into the land not inhabited," where their sins could no more be had in remembrance:

the *atonement* for the people, as appears from the 10th verse compared with the 17th.——The death of the animal was requisite to represent the *means* by which the expiation was effected; and the bearing away the sins of the people on the head of the animal, was requisite to exhibit the *effect*, namely, the removal of the guilt. But for these distinct objects, two animals were necessary to complete the sin-offering.——*Rhenford* contends, that this point is completely established, by an evidence resulting from the nature of the ceremony itself; for he says, The imposition of hands, and the confession, and implied translation of sins upon the victim, being usual in the sacrifice of animals in expiation; and this ceremony being omitted in the case of the goat that was slain, whilst it was employed in the case of the goat that was sent away; decidedly prove that both animals were designed to be considered as *one* offering, and that he latter, consequently, represented him who was to bear the sins of Israel, and by his sufferings to expiate and remove them."—*Magee*, vol. 2, pp. 344–346.

and thus an atonement was made for the people of Israel. Can any thing convey a more striking idea of the penal consequences of sin being transferred from the people to the offering, and the perfect remission of their sins, in consequence of this transference, than this symbolical representation? Who among the Israelites could doubt that sin deserved death; that the death of the offender was typically transferred to the sacrifice; and that, henceforth, his sin was no more to be remembered?[8] Minute cri-

[8] Mr. Faber has furnished us with a very interesting account of a singular custom which prevailed among the Egyptians, on offering certain sacrifices; and which throws much light on the idea connected with laying the hand on the head of a victim, and confessing sin. "There is," says he, "a curious particular, mentioned by Plutarch from Castor, relative to the expiatory sacrifice of the Egyptians.—Herodotus had stated, that the Egyptians, in the devotement of their expiatory sacrifice, were wont to deprecate upon the head of the vicarious victim the several evils which might otherwise fall either upon the sacrificers themselves, or upon all Egypt; and he had moreover remarked, that the bulls, destined for such oblations, were, after a careful examination, sealed upon the horns by sacerdotal officers, set apart for that precise purpose."—Herod. Hist. lib. ii. § 38, 39.

"Both these matters are confirmed by Plutarch: but he adds, what Herodotus had omitted to specify, an account of the exact impression made by the sacred signet. *Those of the priesthood*, says he, *who are called sealers, mark the bull, destined for the expiatory sacrifice, with a seal, which (as Castor*

ticism might possibly invent another way of accounting for the ceremony, but the plain *common sense of mankind* would put no other construction on this, and other atonements, than that they were offered as *vicarious* sacrifices, and that the pardon of sin was inseparably connected with them. No other natural construction could be given of them, than that *animal sacrifice was, at least a condition or consideration, without which sin could, in no case, be pardoned: that neither repentance nor amendment of life would avail for the remission of sin, if sacrifice were neglected; and that the expiatory, piacular, and vicarious offering, was the real ground of their acceptance with God.*

Having, then, I trust, made it plain that ANIMAL SACRIFICE is of divine origin, and, that it

tells us) bears the device of a man in a kneeling attitude, with his arms bound behind him, and with a sword pointing to his throat.—Plutarch. de Isid. et Osir. § 31.

"Now, when the professed object of the sacrifice is considered, there can be little doubt, I think, as to the import of the device upon the signet. It set forth, that the penalty, or deadly calamity, impending over the head of the sacrificer, was transferred to the head of the victim: it exhibited the fate of the sacrificer, when not secured by the mysterious efficacy of the vicarious sacrifice."—*Faber's* Treatise on Sacrifice, p. 42.

was instituted for the purpose of *expiatory and vicarious atonement* for *moral transgression;* it only remains that I show—

III. THAT IT HAD A DIRECT REFERENCE TO THE SACRIFICE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST UPON THE CROSS.

This link is still wanting to connect it with the Christian dispensation, and to prove that, from the beginning, the faith of God's people was directed to some great atoning sacrifice, hereafter to be offered, which should have an intrinsic value in itself, and which should "take away the sins of the world."

1. *The fact that animal sacrifice ceased to be offered, when the Christian religion began to spread over the world, is, of itself, presumptive evidence that its object was accomplished, and that a dispensation had commenced, which superseded the necessity of making any further atonement for sin.* Sacrifice, be it remembered, was deemed necessary to expiate sin; and as every human being, from the first parent of man, down to the coming of our Lord, had occasion for such an expiation, sacrifice was an essential constituent of every dispensation, till the esta-

blishment of the religion of Christ. But this necessity did not cease at his advent. It has been as pressing since as ever it was before ; and expiation is as needful now as it was in the Patriarchal or Levitical economy. Would then sacrifice have ceased to be offered, if some substitute for it had not been provided? Would that remedy for a burdened conscience, which had given repose to so many thousands of penitent sinners, have been withdrawn, if some other, of at least equal efficiency, had not been brought to light? Would that propitiatory of the divine favour, which had hitherto been "the hope of the ends of the earth," have been set aside, unless some other access to the mercy-seat had been discovered for those who wish to "draw nigh unto God?" Most assuredly not. This would indeed have been to retrograde "in the divine economy ; to withdraw a sacrament of grace and pardon ; and to reduce purposes of mercy from the greater to the less :" a remedial appointment would have been cancelled, and a wretched world left to hopeless despair. This, then, cannot for a moment be admitted. The Christian dispensation must have provided something at least equally efficacious with animal sacrifice, and this can be nothing less than the sacrifice of him, who "redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being

made a curse for us." He was the great antitype, and the representative was suspended; he was the living substance, and the shadow disappeared.

2. We shall be brought to the same conclusion, *when we reflect on the intrinsic value of sacrifices.* They were, *in themselves,* perfectly worthless in the sight of God: and when they were offered under the notion of a bribe, they were rejected with indignation. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord?—Bring no more vain oblations.—If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.—Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?" Hence David, despairing to obtain the pardon of his heinous offence by accumulating sacrifices, and conscious that they possessed no inherent quality to buy off the divine displeasure, says, "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it thee: thou delightest not in burnt-offerings." And who does not at once see, that "the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin?" and that, however suitable they might be, as emblems to set forth something that had intrinsic value; and however appropriate for the expressing of faith in some means to

be hereafter provided by God, for removing the penalty of transgression, they had nothing in themselves, with which either nature or reason could invest them, to make them a proper atonement for moral offences? They were then, at the best, what indeed they are called by the inspired writers, only types and shadows. They were a *voice* proclaiming the divine mercy to man, and the channel through which it should for a time flow,—but they were no more. They made *known* the atonement, but they were not the *real* expiation. They symbolized the death which the offender deserved, but the sufferings of animals could not commute the awful penalty. The act of sacrificing them could express the faith of the penitent, that another voluntary offering might take away the guilt of sin, but it could not make the satisfaction which injured justice demanded. All these things clearly show that sacrifice had an ulterior object, and another victim in view; and, pointing, as it did, to this, it was set aside as worthless when the great Deliverer appeared.

But we are not left to draw our conclusions merely from the reason of things. We have the more sure word of inspiration to establish them. For—

3. *The name of the Lamb of God is expressly given to our Lord Jesus Christ, in reference to the victim so constantly offered up in sacrifice under the former dispensations.* And in this sacrificial character, he is expressly said "to take away the sin of the world."[9] It was, no doubt, in reference to this animal, which was daily sacrificed for the sins of the people, that the prophet Isaiah, speaking of the sufferings of Messiah, says of him, "he was brought *as a lamb to the slaughter:*"[1] and St. Peter makes a similar allusion, when he says, "ye were not *redeemed* with corruptible things, as silver and gold——but *with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*[2] This passage seems to have a special relation to the price of *redemption* annually paid for the life of every Jew, as recorded in the book of Exodus:[3] and the apostle reminds Christians that it cost more to redeem their souls, than the "half shekel of silver," the price of their ransom under the former dispensation, yea, that they were not redeemed at all with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a spotless and perfect lamb.

[9] Joh. i. 29. [1] Is. liii. 7. [2] 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.
[3] xxx. 12—14—16.

The allusion to the sacrificial lamb is still, if possible, more direct and pointed in the Apocalypse, where St. John saw the Son of God, as the "Lamb *slain from the foundation of the world,*"[4]—that Being to whom all the lambs slain in sacrifice, since sin first entered into the world, had a typical reference, and from which they derived all their virtue to take away sin. And so universally is this peculiar character of the Saviour, as "the Lamb of God," recognised, that he is represented, even in heaven, as sustaining it, and in it receiving the homage of the unnumbered multitude who surround the throne. "The four and twenty elders," says St. John, "fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours—and I heard ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, worthy is *the Lamb that was slain* to receive power and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honour and glory, and blessing."[5]

It is scarcely necessary after this, and especially as the subject will again come before us, to adduce further proof of the reference which the expiatory sacrifices of the Old Testament dispensations had to the Saviour, as bearing the

[4] Rev. xiii. 8. [5] Rev. v. 8—13.

sins of his people upon the cross, but I will just add—

4. *That the whole system of sacrifices is represented in the New Testament as being intended to shadow forth the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ.*

The prophet Isaiah had predicted of the Messiah that he should bear our iniquities: "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou *shalt make his soul an offering for sin,* he shall see his seed."[6] In this, there is an evident allusion to the *sin-offering,* so often mentioned in the Levitical law; and St. Paul takes up the same idea of Christ, when he says, "he hath made him to be *sin* for us, who knew no sin:"[7] an expression which most commentators understand to be an evident allusion to the *sin-offerings* of the previous dispensations.[8] But why do we dwell on particular expressions? St. Paul assures us, that the whole

[6] Isai. liii. 10. [7] 2 Cor. v. 2.

[8] See Abp. Magee, vol. 2, p. 234—243. "The sin-offering, the trespass-offering, and the perpetual burnt-offering, were all expiatory of particular or general guilt; and were all typical of the sacrifice upon the cross."—Bp. Horsley on Hosea, xiv. 2.

Levitical ritual had so immediate a reference to our Lord Jesus Christ, that he says, "the Law is our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ;"[9] and he writes the principal part of his Epistle to the Hebrews to point out the exact parallel between the type and the antitype.

We may therefore safely conclude that, as animal sacrifice was originally of divine institution, and under both the Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, was strictly expiatory of moral transgressions, and of vicarious import, so also it had a direct reference to the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and derived all its intrinsic value from the atonement, which was made for the sins of the world, when he suffered on "the accursed tree."

I have now noticed the principal objections which have been brought against the doctrine of the Atonement, as received by those who are usually denominated orthodox Christians. That other difficulties may be raised against it, is only to say that ingenuity never wants means to give a colourable pretext to whatever it undertakes to advocate: and if nothing is to be received as truth, which has not silenced all that error can

[9] Gal. iii. 24.

advance against it, the articles of faith will be reduced within very narrow limits indeed. The objections, however, which have been noticed, comprehend, I believe, the *substance* of all the rest: and if these have been satisfactorily removed, none, it is presumed, can create any formidable difficulty.

On the subject of animal sacrifice, I have dwelt somewhat at large, both because it has recently excited considerable interest, by the discussion of it, by some able writers; and because it appears to me to have a most important aspect on the doctrine I have undertaken to defend: for, though the view here taken of it may not be thought, by some, to be *essential* to the argument of the vicarious and expiatory sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, especially since many of those who look upon it in a different way, still strenuously advocate the orthodox doctrine of the Atonement, yet it throws so much light on the whole subject, is so constantly alluded to in the New Testament, in many of the passages which are adduced in support of it, and will be so often appealed to in the evidence hereafter to be brought in its vindication, that I could not allow myself to proceed, till I had made this ground sure, and removed

such obstructions as were likely to impede the anxious enquirer after truth. And I trust the candid reader will be convinced, by what has been advanced, that it may now, not only be legitimately brought forward to illustrate the doctrine of the Atonement, but that it may be safely appealed to, as an important pillar and support of it.

SECTION III.

SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF THE DOCTRINE.

CHAPTER I.

A Collection of Passages of Scripture, which are supposed to contain or illustrate the Doctrine of the Atonement.

Having obviated the various objections which are usually brought against the Doctrine of the Atonement, I will now endeavour to support it by scriptural authorities. It is "to the law and to the testimony" that every thing, in matters of faith and doctrine, must be ultimately referred. In speculation, there may be an endless variety; and when the results of it are cheerfully submitted to the infallible decision of the sacred record, there may be no great evil in it; but the danger is, of making these speculations the interpreters of the inspired volume; and thus constituting human opinions the arbiters of a book that was

written to guide and decide those opinions. Few things have done greater injury to the cause of divine truth, than the framing of religious systems, and then bringing them to the word of God, with the view of supporting them. The consequence has been a distortion and wresting of the holy scriptures to countenance the most fatal errors, and to reduce the revelation of God's will, given to man for the purpose of making him wise unto salvation, to the destructive office of leading him to perdition. I cannot help attributing it to causes of this kind, that the doctrine of the Atonement has fallen into discredit among persons, who still are anxious to retain the name of Christians. The scriptures are so clear and so copious on this doctrine, and place it in so important a light, as being the only foundation of a sinner's hope; they present it under such a variety of aspects, and lay such a stress on it, as the final result of all God's counsels of mercy to man; they exhibit it as so wonderfully combining the wisdom and goodness—the justice and mercy—the power and grace of the Divine Being, and the effect of the united offices of the three persons in the Godhead, to save and bless a perishing world, that it would seem almost impossible for a person to cast his eye over the sacred volume, with the least desire to gain a correct knowledge of the nature and

importance of this doctrine, without arriving at the truth, and obtaining a right feeling upon it. And I cannot but hope that the candid reader will be of this opinion, when I have placed before him, in one view, the accumulated evidence which the scriptures afford of the truth of this doctrine, and in the very words of scripture, without note or comment. I will quote them in the consecutive order in which they lie in the Bible, and as given in our authorized translation.[1]

[1] I am quite aware that the correctness of the authorized translation of two or three of these texts has been questioned; and if the truth of the doctrine of the Atonement rested on these alone, it would be an indispensable duty to go into a minute criticism of them; but it is not upon one or two passages that the doctrine is founded, nor on the turn which may be given to a few detached expressions; but upon the broad and prominent and self-evident meaning of almost innumerable passages, expressed in every variety of form, and interwoven in the very texture of the sacred volume. And I mention this, not so much with the view of apologizing for the sparing manner in which I have entered into critical discussions of particular texts, as for satisfying the merely English reader, that this fundamental doctrine does not rest on one or two insulated texts, which might probably admit of another construction, but has its origin in the common-sense meaning of multiplied and undisputed passages of holy writ. The author of this Treatise values legitimate criticism and minute interpretation very highly, and some portion of his time and humble talent has been spent upon them; but, in a case like the present, he would rather rest his cause on the number and variety of scripture evidence, than on the clearest result of verbal criticism.

I believe, then, that Jesus Christ made an atonement for sin, by dying *the just for*, or in the place of, *the unjust*, because I find the following passages in the holy scripture.

" He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.—All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all.—Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.—Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself.—The Son of man came . . . to give his life a ransom for many.—This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins.—He took bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body.—O fools and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things . . . and beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he explained unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.—Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer . . . and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name.—Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.—The bread which I give is my flesh, which I will

give for the life of the world.—The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep.—It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not: and this spake he not of himself; but being high-priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation.—Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.—Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.—To him give all the prophets witness, that, through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.—Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.—Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.—Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.—Who was delivered for our offences.—When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.—Scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure, for a good man, some

would even dare to die; but God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; much more, then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life: and not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement.—By the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.—By the obedience of one man, shall many be made righteous.—For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.—He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.—Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died.—We preach Christ crucified.—I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.—Even Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us.—Christ died for our sins according to the scripture.—He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.—Ye are bought with a price.—God hath reconciled us to himself, through Jesus Christ.—God was in

Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.—The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them and rose again.—Who gave himself for our sins.—Who loved me, and gave himself for me.—He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.—God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.—In whom we have redemption, through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.—That he might reconcile both unto God, in one body, by the cross.—God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.—Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.—And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself.—And you that were sometime alienated, hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh, through death.—God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us.—Who gave himself a ransom for all.—Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.—When he had, by himself, purged our

sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.—That he, by the grace of God, should taste of death for every man.—That he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest . . . to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.—Who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once when he offered up himself.—Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.—By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.—Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.—For this cause, he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.—Now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself.—Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.—This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.—Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.—Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but

with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.—Who his own-self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin might live to righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed.—Christ also hath once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.—Denying the Lord that bought them.—The blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth us from all sin.—If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.—Your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.—Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.—Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood.—In the midst of the throne . . . stood a Lamb as it had been slain.—They fell down before the Lamb, and sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation.—Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.—The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."[2]

[2] Isa. liii. 5, 6, 10, 12. Dan. ix. 26. Matt. xx. 28; xxvi. 26, 28. Mark x. 45. Luke xxiv. 25, 26, and 46, 47. John i.

CHAPTER II.

Remarks on the Scripture Evidence of the Doctrine.

I THOUGHT it best to bring into one view the chief passages of scripture, which relate to the doctrine of salvation, through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, that the reader might have before him, not only the evidence on which the truth of the doctrine rests, but also the high importance which is attached to it: and having done this, I will now proceed to make a few remarks on the relation they bear to the Atonement. And the first point to which I would call the attention of the reader is

29; vi. 51; x. 11; xi. 49—51; xv. 12, 13. Acts iv. 12; x. 43; xiii. 38, 39; xx. 28, 38. Rom. iii. 24, 25; iv. 25; v. 6—11, 18, 19; viii. 3, 32, 34. 1 Cor. i. 23; ii. 2; v. 7; vi. 20; vii. 23; xv. 3. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, 18, 19, 21. Gal. i. 4; ii. 20; iii. 13; vi. 14. Eph. i. 7; ii. 16; iv. 32; v. 2. Col. i. 14, 20, 22. 1 Thes. v. 9, 10. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Tit. ii. 14. Heb. i. 3; ii. 9, 17; vii. 27; ix. 12—15, 26, 28; x. 12; xiii. 12. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; ii. 24; iii. 18. 2 Pet. ii. 1. 1 John i. 7; ii. 1, 2, 12. Rev. i. 5; v. 6, 8, 9, 12, 13; xiii. 6.

1. THE BODY OF EVIDENCE *which they afford to the doctrine.* I readily grant that they do not all bear an equally strong and direct testimony to its truth: but I shall have no difficulty in showing that they all have *some* relation to it: and as, in cases of a civil or criminal nature which are brought before courts of law, incidental and collateral evidence is often considered of the most convincing and satisfactory nature, because it grows out of facts and admits of no collusion, so it is in the subject before us. Many of the just recited passages, being written without any apparent design of supporting the atonement, and yet implying it, plainly show that it was a doctrine well settled in the mind of the writers, and that it is incidentally alluded to, or interwoven in the subject, as a truth fully established and universally believed.

Let it then be remarked, that the truth of this doctrine does not rest on one or two insulated passages of holy scripture, but on such a body of accumulated evidence as can scarcely be brought in support of any other revealed truth. If no Christian would feel it respectful to the Divine Author of the sacred volume to doubt the truth of any doctrine clearly revealed, though it were supported by only one or two texts of scripture;

surely no one will hesitate to receive a doctrine which is confirmed by such numerous and independent passages as those just recited; passages, deduced from the Old Testament and the New, from each of the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, almost every Epistle, and the Revelation of St. John: issuing from the lips of prophets, apostles, and the Son of God: and selected from subjects, some of which are directly on the doctrine; others, clearly implying it; and not a few, proceeding upon it, as the foundation of all that is valuable to us in possession, or vast and everlasting in hope.

But strong as this evidence is in the number of its witnesses, it will receive still further confirmation by a consideration of

2. THE VARIOUS WAYS *in which they give their testimony to the truth of this doctrine.* Though the point upon which they bear is uniformly the same, yet the modes in which they express themselves are greatly diversified. I will class them under several distinct heads; and advert to those passages

(1.) Which represent PARDON AND RECONCILIATION *as flowing from our Lord Jesus Christ;*

first, indeed, without any immediate reference to his death; but still in such a way as to show that they would not have been granted, but out of regard, in some way or other, to him. "To him," it is stated, "give all the prophets witness, that, *through his name,* whosoever believeth in him, should *receive remission of their sins.*[3] Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that, *through his name,* is preached unto you *forgiveness of sins.*[4] *Through faith in his blood,* to declare his righteousness for *the remission of sins* that are past.[5] God, *for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.*[6] *Your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.*[7] Who hath *reconciled* us to himself, *through Jesus Christ.*[8] *God was in Christ, reconciling* the world unto himself.[9] *By him,* to *reconcile all things* to himself.[1] That *he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest*—to make *reconciliation for the sins* of the people."[2]

In these passages we clearly perceive that the blessings of pardon and reconciliation with God are inseparably connected, by some means or other, with our Lord Jesus Christ: and we shall find by others, which I shall now adduce, that the

[3] Acts x. 43. [4] Acts xiii. 38. [5] Rom. iii. 25.
[6] Eph. iv. 32. [7] 1 John ii. 12. [8] 2 Cor. v. 18. [9] Ibid. v. 19.
[1] Col. i. 20. [2] Heb. ii. 17.

connecting link is his *death*. And this fact may serve to illustrate the general truth, that when benefits are said to be conferred upon man, through Jesus Christ, it is in reference to his sufferings and death upon the cross. It is through this channel alone that God communicates with man; and this fact being once understood, it was unnecessary that it should, in every case, be directly stated. Such *allusions* as are just mentioned will be sufficient to call forth the customary association of thought. The texts are such as follow. "When we were enemies, we were *reconciled* to God by the *death* of his Son.[3] In whom we have redemption *through his blood,* the *forgiveness of sins*.[4] That he might *reconcile* both in one body by *the cross*.[5] Having made peace *through the blood of his cross,* by him to *reconcile* all things unto himself."[6]

The plain and only conclusion which can be drawn from such passages as these is, that the death of our Lord Jesus Christ is an indispensable consideration and condition in the remission of sins, and reconciliation with himself. I will next adduce a few passages in which we shall find,

[3] Rom. v. 10. [4] Eph. i. 7; also Col. i. 14.
[5] Eph. ii. 16. [6] Col. i. 21, 22.

(2.) *That* SALVATION *is ascribed to him alone.* The numerous texts, indeed, in which he is denominated *the Saviour,* plainly imply that deliverance from the penal consequences of sin is to be ascribed to him alone. His very name designates that this was to be the prominent part of his character, and the great object for which he should be sent into the world. The angel, therefore, who foretold his birth, gave directions that they should "call his name *Jesus,* for he shall *save* his people from their sins."[7] And, corresponding with his name, it is declared "neither is there *salvation* in any other; for there is *none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.*[8] We shall be *saved* from wrath *through him.*[9] He became the author of eternal *salvation* unto all them that obey him.[1] God hath appointed us to obtain *salvation* by *our Lord Jesus Christ,* who hath *died for us.*"[2] And this last passage leads me again to connect the more *general* expressions of salvation *through Christ,* with the more *immediate means* by which it is obtained, that is, his *death* upon the cross; and the same conclusion will again follow, that this death was an indispensable condition and

[7] Matt. i. 21. [8] Acts iv. 12. [9] Rom. v. 9.
[1] Heb. v. 9. [2] 1 Thess. v. 9, 10.

consideration to the attainment of this deliverance from the fearful consequences of sin.

But I proceed a step further, and call attention to those texts which speak of

(3.) THE DEATH OF CHRIST AS THE PRICE OF OUR RANSOM AND REDEMPTION. "The Son of man came to *give his life a ransom* for many.[3] Who *gave himself a ransom* for all.[4] Who *gave himself for us*, that he might *redeem us* from all iniquity.[5] Feed the church of God, which he *purchased with his blood*.[6] Being justified freely by the *redemption that is* in Jesus.[7] Christ hath *redeemed us* from the curse of the law, being *made a curse for us*.[8] Ye are bought *with a price*.[9] In whom we have *redemption through his blood*.[1] By *his own blood* he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal *redemption* for us.[2] By means of *death* for the *redemption of the transgressions* that were under the first testament.[3] Ye were not *redeemed* with corruptible things—but with the *precious blood of Christ*.[4] Thou *wast slain*, and hast *redeemed* us to God *by thy blood*."[5]

[3] Matt. xx. 28; also Mark x. 45. [4] 1 Tim. ii. 6. [5] Tit. ii. 16. [6] Acts xx. 28. [7] Rom. iii. 24. [8] Gal. iii. 13. [9] 1 Cor. vi. 20. [1] Eph. i. 7; also Col. i. 14. [2] Heb. ix. 12. [3] Heb. ix. 15. [4] 1 Pet. i. 18. [5] Rev. v. 9.

There could, one should suppose, be but one conclusion drawn from these passages of scripture. The custom of offering a ransom for a captive, and paying a price to redeem what had been forfeited or lost, is of such common occurrence, that it would be equally absurd to produce instances of it, or to state that the sum paid was considered an equivalent for the benefit obtained. But the *specific price* of ransom and redemption, of which such frequent mention, as we have seen, is made in the New Testament, it is of the utmost importance to notice. It was the blood, the life, the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. To ransom sinners he laid down his own life: to redeem the lost he shed his own blood: to restore the accursed he sustained on the cross their curse. Here, then, we have *the benefit* and *the price paid for it* most distinctly stated; *man's redemption*, and *Christ's death*, as the purchase of it. His ransom, and Christ's blood, as the price of it. Would it not then be in the highest degree absurd to deny that the *death* of the Son of God is the *condition* and *consideration* for which man obtains the inestimable benefit of life and salvation? And if this be the case, the doctrine of the Atonement is satisfactorily proved. We are saved by the death of Christ; and not in virtue of our own repentance, nor by the unconditional

exercise of divine grace and mercy. Let us, however, view the subject in another light, and notice those passages of scripture which represent our Lord Jesus Christ as

(4.) SUFFERING FOR OUR SINS. This will bring the evidence still more home to the subject. It will show, not only the benefit we receive from his death, but also the *specific and definite cause of his sufferings;* and prove that they were exclusively and entirely penal and vicarious. It is stated, that "he was *wounded* for *our transgressions,* he was *bruised* for *our iniquities:* the *chastisement* of our peace was *upon him,* and with *his stripes we are healed*—The Lord hath *laid upon* him the *iniquity* of us all.[6] The Son of man came to *give his life* a ransom *for many.*[7] Who *gave himself* a ransom *for all.*[8] He *was delivered* for our *offences.*[9] Christ *died* for the *ungodly*[1] While we were yet *sinners, Christ died* for us. When we were *enemies* we were reconciled to God by the *death* of his Son.[2] He *spared* not his own Son, but *delivered* him up *for us all.*[3] Christ *died* for *our sins.*[4] Who *gave himself* for *our sins.*[5] Who his own self *bare*

[6] Is. liii. 5, 6. [7] Matt. xx. 28. [8] 1 Tim. ii. 6.
[9] Rom. iv. 25. [1] Rom. v. 6. [2] Rom. v. 8, 10. [3] Rom. viii. 32.
[4] 1 Cor. xv. 3. [5] Gal. i. 4.

our sins in his own *body on the tree*—by *whose stripes ye* were *healed.*[6] Christ also hath *once suffered* for *our sins,* the *just* for the *unjust.*"[7]

In order to form a just conception of passages like these, it is necessary to have a correct idea of the way in which God regards sin. It is much the custom of those, who entertain the notion that nothing is wanted for its remission but the repentance of the offender, to represent transgression as incapable of provoking the wrath of Almighty God, and to consider it as utterly undeserving of the punishment of everlasting death. And I apprehend that the desire of removing such an imputation lies at the root of their efforts to set aside the doctrine of the Atonement. We shall, however, find nothing in scripture to countenance this notion of the venial nature of sin. On the contrary, this book assures us that "the *wrath of God* is revealed from heaven *against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;*"[8]—that "if we sin wilfully—there remaineth no more SACRIFICE FOR SINS; but a certain FEARFUL LOOKING FOR OF JUDGMENT AND FIERY INDIGNATION WHICH SHALL DEVOUR THE ADVERSARIES—for we know him that hath said, *Vengeance belongeth*

[6] 1 Pet. ii. 24. [7] 1 Pet. iii. 18. [8] Rom. i. 18.

unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord—It is A FEARFUL THING to fall into the hands of the living God."[9] "See then that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven—for OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE."[1] "Depart from me YE CURSED INTO EVERLASTING FIRE, prepared for the devil and his angels—and these shall go away into EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT."[2] These, and many similar passages, plainly show that sin is a much greater evil, and will incur a much severer punishment than many are wont to imagine; moreover, that it is not doing an injustice to God to suppose that he looks upon it with wrath and indignation.

There is nothing, then, in the character or veniality of sin, which can induce a reasonable suspicion that it is made of too much importance, when we represent extraordinary means as being necessary to avert its consequences, and to reconcile a just and holy God to the offender. The language of scripture, we see, fully bears us out in this view of it; and if it shall appear, from the

[9] Heb. x. 26, 27, 30, 31.

[1] Heb. xii. 25, 29. [2] Matt. xxv. 41, 46.

same scriptures, that nothing less than the death of the Son of God could avail to this purpose, there will be no need to have recourse to metaphor and allusion to account for these statements, because there is enough, in the nature of the case, to justify a literal and exact construction of them.

I would also remark, that the sufferings and death of Christ, mentioned in the passages cited above, whether in reference to sin or to transgressors, are evidently to be understood in the same sense. If he died for sin, it was to remove its penal consequences; if he died for sinners, it was to exempt them from punishment; and, in both cases, he may be strictly said to die "the just, for the unjust;" and the texts may be cited as synonymous and convertible.[3]

[3] From the same mode of expression being used in reference both to *sin* and *sinners*, in one or two of the above cited passages, Socinians would persuade us that the Greek prepositions ὑπὲρ and περὶ are not to be understood as signifying *for*, in the sense of, *in the place or stead*, but *for*, in the sense of, *on account of*, that is, *for the benefit of*. But this construction of the prepositions does not at all remove the difficulty, if there be any; for it is not less absurd to speak of *dying for the benefit of our offences*, than *in stead* of them. The fact is, that

Having premised these particulars, I may now observe that, in the texts referred to, the only conclusion that can fairly be drawn from them is, that *Christ suffered in the place and stead of sinners, so as, by his death, to avert their punishment:* or, in other words, that *his death is such a consideration and condition in the remission of the penalty of sin, that, without it, that penalty would have taken its due course, and have been fully inflicted on the offender.*

This is the conclusion to which the passages above quoted would *naturally* lead any indifferent reader. He could draw no other inference, unless previously admonished that another construction of them was possible, because he would find the same thing repeated in such a variety of ways, and all in such plain and perspicuous language, that his mind could only be drawn to one point—to one grand truth—the doctrine we are

it is in reference to the *penalty* of transgression that the death of Christ takes place; and it is the same thing, in regard to this, whether he be said to die for the *sins*, which incur that penalty, or the *sinner*, who is to suffer it. Hence Valckenarius, on 1 Cor. xv. 3. says, "Christus dicitur mortem subiisse ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, vel simpliciter ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν. *He died for our sins*, or simply, *he died for us.*" p. 324.

maintaining—that Christ died for sinners in order to relieve them from its penalty;—that he was wounded for their transgressions;—that he bore the chastisement due to them;—that he suffered for their sins;—that he, who was "just," died in the place and stead of those who were "unjust;"—and that if he had not undertaken to reconcile sinners to their offended judge, they must have suffered the penalty of transgression, as the enemies of God;—and he would be convinced that the plain and obvious doctrine of the whole is, that the sufferings which Christ endured on the cross, were such a consideration and condition in the pardoning of sin, that the latter could not have taken place, if the former had not been undergone.

I may further add, that, what would be inferred from the natural interpretation of the passages, is confirmed by the *just and grammatical construction of them.*

On the first of the texts above cited, in connexion with its context, in the fifty-third of Isaiah, it has been shown by Archbishop Magee, with a depth of research, and patience of investigation, as well as with a force of argument, and clearness of evidence which have seldom been equalled,

"1. That neither the expressions used by Isaiah in the fourth verse,[4] nor the application made of them by St. Matthew,[5] are in any degree inconsistent with the acceptation of the phrase *bearing sins*, here employed by the prophet, in the sense of *sustaining*, or *undergoing the burden of them, by suffering for them:* 2. That the use of the expression in other parts of the Old Testament, so far from opposing, justifies and confirms this acceptation: and, 3. That the minute description of the sufferings of Christ, their cause and their effects, which here accompanies this phrase, not only establishes this interpretation, but fully unfolds the whole nature of the Christian atonement, by showing that Christ has suffered, *in our place*, what was due to our transgressions; and that by, and in virtue of his sufferings, our reconciliation with God has been effected."[6]

[4] "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken of God, and afflicted."

[5] Matt. viii. 17. "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."

[6] See Dissertations on the Atonement, vol. i. p. 463. See the whole disquisition, extending from page 399 to 482. As the Archbishop has left nothing to be added to his elaborate comment, and as it would be difficult to abridge, and unsuitable to this Treatise to quote the whole of it, I must refer my readers to the work itself for full satisfaction on this important passage.

With regard to the passages cited from the New Testament, I would observe, that in *all* of them, the natural is the true and real construction. Both the common use of the prepositions ἀντὶ, ὑπὲρ, διὰ, and περὶ, here used, (with the exception perhaps of διὰ, which occurs only once,) and the subject with which they stand connected, convey and require the meaning of vicarious substitution. I believe the preposition ἀντὶ admits of no other sense than that of equivalence or substitution, except by way of accommodation; and even then, it so far retains its original meaning, as to carry it, by implication, into its more remote significations. In the *Septuagint*, it is continually, if not universally, used in its appropriate sense. Take an instance or two. "God hath appointed me another seed, *instead*," or in *the place*, "of Abel."[7] "Wherefore have ye returned evil *for*," or in *the place* of, "good?"[8] "Joseph gave them bread in *exchange for*," or as an *equivalent for*, "horses and for the flocks, &c."[9] "There Aaron died—and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office *in his stead*."[1] To these passages from the Sep-

[7] Σπέρμα ἕτερον ἀντὶ Ἄβελ. Gen. iv. 25.

[8] Πονηρὰ ἀντὶ καλῶν. Gen. xliv. 4.

[9] Ἄρτους ἀντὶ τῶν ἵππων. κ. τ. λ. xlvii. 17.

[1] Καὶ ἱεράτευσεν Ἐλεάζαρ υἱος ἀυτοῦ ἀντ' ἀυτοῦ. Deut. x. 6. See also Gen. ii. 21; ix. 6; xxii. 18; xxx. 2; xxxvi. 33.

tuagint, I will add one or two from the New Testament, where the same idea is fully conveyed. "Archelaus reigned in Judæa *in the room* of his father Herod."[2] "If he ask a fish, will he *for* (or in the stead of) a fish, give him a serpent?"[3] "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye *for* an eye, and a tooth *for* a tooth."[4] "Recompense to no man evil *for* evil,"[5] or one bad action *in the stead* of another. In all these passages the idea of substitution or equivalence, or commutation, is associated with the use of the preposition, and no other can possibly be attached to it. The same use of it is constantly found in classic writers, as may be seen by consulting the passages placed at the foot of the page.[6] When,

[2] ἀντὶ Ἡρῳδοῦ. Matt. ii. 22.

[3] μὴ ἀντὶ ἰχθύος ὄφιν ἐπιδώσει αὐτῷ. Luke xi. 11.

[4] Ὀφθαλμὸν ἀντὶ ὀφθαλμοῦ, καὶ ὀδόντα ἀντὶ ὀδόντος. Matt. v. 38.

[5] Μηδενὶ κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ ἀποδιδόντες. Rom. xii. 17.

[6] Καὶ αὐτοί τε ἀντὶ πολέμου εἰρήνην ἑλώμεθα, καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις Ἕλλησιν ἀνάπαυσιν κακῶν ποιήσωμεν. And let us both ourselves choose peace *instead of* war, and also, &c. Thucid. Hist. lib. iv. § 20. Ἀντὶ δὲ τιμῆς καὶ δόξης, αἰτία μᾶλλον. But *instead of* honour and glory, blame would rather be incurred. Thucid. lib. iv. § 86.

—— ἦ ἄρα δή τι εἴσκομεν ἄξιον εἶναι
Τρεῖς ἑνὸς ἀντὶ πεφάσθαι.—Hom. Il. xiii. 446, 447.

"—— *Three warriors slain for one.*"

therefore, we find it said, as it is by our Lord himself, both in the gospel of St. Matthew and St. Mark, that "the Son of man came—to give his life a ransom *for* many," (δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν) can any reasonable doubt be entertained that we are to understand, that our Lord laid down his life *in the place and stead* of his people."

Ἕν ἀνθ' ἑνός. *One for one.* Plato de Leg. 4.

Ἄλλόν τινα φίλον ἀντὶ βασιλέως ζητεῖν. Xen. Hel. 7.

——— ἀξία δέ μοι
Τιμῆς, ἐπεὶ τέθνηκεν ἀντ' ἐμοῦ μόνη.
—— "Since she alone hath *died for* me."
Eurip. Alcest. 445, 446.

Οἰδ' ἀντὶ σοῦ γε κατθανεῖν ὑφειμένην. Ibid. 540.
Αλλ' οὐ σὺ νεκρὸν ἀντὶ σοῦ τόνδ' ἐκφέρεις; Ib. 732.

And these last examples are deserving of the greater attention, because they are exactly similar to that in the gospel. Alcestis underwent death in the place of her husband Admetus, and thus paid her own life as the ransom of his. The only *condition* on which his life could be spared was that some one should die in *his place and stead;* and when no other could be found, the love of Alcestis was stronger than death, and she heroically sacrificed her own life to redeem her husband from death. Who, that recollects this affecting story, can for a moment question the infinitely greater love of the Son of God, or doubt that he offered up his life as a ransom for sinners, as this generous woman did hers for the ransom of Admetus?

But this conclusion, to which we are necessarily brought by the meaning and constant use of the preposition ἀντὶ (*for*), is rendered absolutely certain by the subject with which it is connected. Our Lord states, that it was his errand, in coming into the world, to give his life as a *ransom*, or *price of redemption* (λύτρον, redemptionis pretium) for many: but what idea can we attach to a *price* paid as a ransom for any one, but that of an *equivalent?* And if that price were "neither silver nor gold," but "the precious blood of Christ,"—if it were the life of the Son of God,—who can hesitate in believing that this was substituted and accepted as an equivalent for the forfeited life of transgressors? The very lowest idea that can be attached to the passage is, that the death of Christ was *the condition and consideration* on which alone the sinner could be restored to life and liberty. And, if this be true, we have incontrovertibly established the doctrine of the Atonement.

Having established, from the preceding comment on our Lord's offering his life a ransom for many, the doctrine that his life was laid down in the place and stead of transgressors, there will be no difficulty in coming to the same conclusion, from each of the other passages which are placed

at the head of this division of the subject. When we read that "Christ *died for the ungodly;*"—that "whilst we were yet sinners, Christ *died for us;*"—that "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God *by the death of his Son;*" that he was "*delivered up for us all;*" that "he *died for our sins;*" that he "*bare our sins in his own body on the tree;*" that "he *suffered for our sins,* the *just* for the *unjust;*"—we are irresistibly led to conclude that he died in the place and stead of sinners; and that his death is the indispensable condition and consideration on which offenders are exempted from the penalty of sin. The passages, in their natural and obvious interpretation, can mean nothing less.

But a more minute examination of these texts will render it impossible to entertain a reasonable doubt of the correctness of this conclusion. The prepositions ὑπὲρ and περὶ, which are those only that are used in these passages, have generally the signification which has been affixed to ἀντὶ; and it will be found that they are often used as synonymous and convertible. When, for instance, we find our Lord saying, "that the Son of man came—to give his life a ransom *for* (ἀντὶ) many," who can doubt that St. Paul had this very passage in his mind, when, speaking of

the same Saviour, he said, "who gave himself *a ransom for* (ὑπὲρ) *all?*" (ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων)[7] and if, as we have seen is the case, the former preposition can admit only the sense of substitution, we are equally certain that the latter in this text, is to be taken in the same way; and hence *both* passages are direct and positive evidence of the vicarious character of our Lord's death.[8]

Now, having established this meaning of ὑπὲρ,

[7] 1 Tim. ii. 6.

[8] The same convertible use of the prepositions ἀντὶ and ὑπὲρ is found in the *Alcestis of Euripides,* in reference to her dying for her husband. Instances of the use of ἀντὶ have already been given (pp. 216, 217.) The following show that ὑπὲρ has the same signification.

Μὴ θνῇσχ' ὑπὲρ τοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς, ὃνδ' ἐγὼ πρὸ σοῦ. v. 706.
Σοφῶς δ' ἐφεῦρες, ὥστε μὴ θανεῖν ποτε,
Ἐι τὴν παροῦσαν καθανεῖν πέισεις ἀὲι
Γυναῖχ' ὑπὲρ σοῦ. vv. 715—717.
Ἐμοὶ δ' ὄνειδος μὴ θανεῖν ὑπὲρ τέκνου.
Eurip. Androm. v. 411.

In these instances, no doubt was ever entertained that the death of *Alcestis* was substituted for that of *Admetus.* It was *vicarious,* and the indispensable condition on which her husband could be exempted from dying. What sound reason then can be assigned for not ascribing the same *vicarious* import to the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is again and again, as we have seen, represented in the same way, and in the same language as that before us?

when standing in connexion with the death of Christ as a *ransom* for sinners, we may safely apply it to the rest of the cases, where it relates to his suffering on the cross, though not immediately associated with the idea of the price of redemption. It can have no other import than that he suffered in the place and stead of transgressors, and that this was the indispensable *condition* of their exemption from the penalty of sin.[9]

9 I cannot dismiss this topic without quoting a passage from *St. Clement*, one of the apostolical fathers, to show in what sense *he* understood the expression of Christ "*giving himself* FOR *us*." In reference to Gal. i. 4, he says, Διὰ τὴν ἀγάπην ἣν ἔσχεν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, τὸ αἷμα αὐτοῦ ἔδωκεν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν, ἐν θελήματι Θεοῦ, καὶ τὴν σαρκὰ ὑπὲρ τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν, καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν. *Patr. Apost.* vol. i. pp. 189, 190. *On account of the love which he bore towards us, Jesus Christ our Lord, according to the will of God, gave his blood for us;* HIS FLESH FOR OUR FLESH, AND HIS SOUL FOR OUR SOULS. St. *Ignatius* also, another of the apostolic fathers, speaking of Christ, says, Δοῦς ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν λύτρον, *He gave himself for us, as the price of redemption.* Ignat. ad Trallenses.

In reference to 2 Cor. v. 21, *Eusebius* has Τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὁ Θέος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἀντίψυχον ὑπὲρ πάντων ἡμῶν προέμενος αὐτὸν. Demonstrat. Evang. lib. x. *God made him to be sin for us who knew not sin, when he gave him, as a ransom,* (ἀντίψυχον *life for life*) *for us all.* And again he speaks of Christ as having been made ἀντίψυχον ἡμῶν καὶ

If, therefore, we had no further scriptural authority than the texts referred to in this divi-

ἀντίλυτρον. *Theodoret,* in explaining 1 Tim. ii. 6. says, *ὅιον τί λύτρον ἑαυτὸν δέδωκε, He gave himself as it were a certain price of redemption.*

Raphelius on Rom. v. 8, thus comments: Ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀπέθανε, id est, *ἀντὶ, loco, vice nostra* mortuus est, ut nos mortis pœnâ liberaremur. *Vicariam* enim mortem *hoc loquendi genere Græci declarant.* Neque Socinianis, qui secus interpretantur, quenquam ex Græcis credo assensorem esse. Nostræ sententiæ Xenophon adstipulatur. Nam cum Seuthes puerum formosum bello captum occidere vellet, Episthenes autem, puerorum amator, se pro illius morte deprecatorem præberet, rogat Seuthes Episthenem: Ἦ *καὶ ἐθέλοις ἄν, ὦ* Ἐπίσθενες, ΥΠΕΡ ΤΟΥΤΟΥ ΑΠΟΘΑΝΕΙΝ; *Vellesne, mi Episthenes,* PRO HOC MORI? Cumque is nihil dubitaret pro pueri vita cervicem præbere, Seuthes vicissim puerum interrogat, *εἰ παίσειεν αὐτὸν* ANTI *ἐκείνου; num hunc feriri* PRO SE VELLET? De Exped. Cyri. &c.——Et Hist. Græc. &c. *Προείπων δὲ ὁ* Ἀγεσιλάος, *ὅστις παρέχοιτο ἵππον καὶ ὅπλα καὶ ἀνδρὰ δοκίμον, ὅτι ἐξέστι αὐτῷ μὴ στρατέυεσθαι, ἐποίησεν οὕτω τάντα συντόμως πράττεσθαι, ὥσπερ ἄν τις τὸν* ΥΠΕΡ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΑΠΟΘΑΝΟΥΜΕΝΟΝ *προθύμως ζητόιη. Quumque Agesilaus denunciasset fore, ut, quicumque daret equum et arma et peritum hominem, immunis esset a militia: effecit, ut hæc non aliter magna celeritate facerent, atque si quis alacriter aliquem* SUO LOCO moriturum quæreret. De Venat. pag. 768. Ἀντίλοχος *τοῦ πατρὸς* ΥΠΕΡΑΠΟΘΑΝΩΝ, *τοσάυτης ἔτυχεν ἐυκλείας, ὥστε μόνος φιλοπάτωρ παρὰ τοῖς* Ἑλλήσιν *ἀναγορέυθηναι. Antilochus* PRO PATRE *morti sese objiciens, tantum gloriæ consecutus est, ut solus apud Græcos amans patris appelletur.*—Et quid opus est aliis exemplis? cum luculentissimum sit, Joh. xi. 50, ubi mortuus dicitur

sion of the subject, for maintaining that Christ died in the place and stead of sinners, I see not how this authority could be respected, without receiving the doctrine of the vicarious death of our Lord Jesus Christ. But we have much more to advance in support of this important truth; and I will next adduce those passages of scripture in which our Lord is spoken of, in reference

(5.) *To the Patriarchal and Jewish Sacrifices.* It has, I trust, been fully established that sacrifice was of divine institution, of an expiatory and vicarious power, and was typical of the sacrifice which the Messiah was to offer for the sins of the world. I may, therefore, now assume these qualities of sacrifices; and I have only to show that, in point of fact, Jesus Christ actually and designedly fulfilled all that was prefigured of him, under the Old Testament dispensation. If this point be made out, it will necessarily follow, that he made a vicarious atonement for the sins of mankind, and that this is the consideration and condition to which regard is always had in the pardoning of sin.

Salvator *ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ*. Quod quale sit, mox exponitur, *ἵνα μὴ ὅλον τὸ ἔθνος ἀπόληται.*" *Raphelii. Annot.* tom. ii. pp. 253, 254.

Let it then be remarked, that numerous pasages of the New Testament speak of Jesus Christ in every variety of sacrificial terms. In some of them—

[1. *He is either expressly called a* SACRIFICE, *or said to have* BEEN OFFERED UP AS A SACRIFICE. The texts of this description are the following: "Christ our Passover is *sacrificed* for us.[1] He hath given himself for us, an *offering and a sacrifice* to God, for a sweet-smelling savour.[2] Who needeth not daily to offer up *sacrifice*—for *this he once did*, when he offered up himself.[3] Now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin, by the *sacrifice* of himself.[4] This man—once offered one *sacrifice* for sin."[5]

We have seen that the force of passages like these is attempted to be evaded, by assigning to them a figurative meaning; and alleging that Christians themselves are often represented as offering themselves as sacrifices to God. But, in addition to what has been said in a former part of this treatise, in answer to this objection, it may be replied, that figurative language has

[1] 1 Cor v. 7. [2] Eph. v. 2. [3] Heb. vii. 7.
[4] Heb. ix. 26. [5] Heb. x. 12.

always a relation to something *real*, and to which it is referred as the standard of illustration. Metaphorical sacrifice must, therefore, have some substantial reality, from which it borrows its ideal resemblance, and derives its figurative allusion. But what is the original from which the supposed figures in the present instances are drawn? Not the sacrifices of the Old Testament dispensation;—for these themselves, as we have seen, were only types,—"shadows," as they are called, "of good things to come:" and, if these were not the copy, it were in vain to look for it any where else, but in Him, of whom the apostle says, "the *body* is of Christ." It is, therefore, from the sacrifice of our Lord, that the figurative sacrifices (figurative I mean only in reference to the *object* they were to represent) are drawn: and it is in reference only to him as the *true* sacrifice, that Christians are exhorted to present their "bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God."

But if this were less evident than it is, it will be seen, at the slightest glance, that Christ is spoken of, in these texts, in a way in which it would be the greatest impiety to speak of the most exalted Christians. Whose name, for instance, could be introduced without blasphemy

into the passage, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us?" Of whom, again, could it be said, "Now once, in the end of the world hath he appeared, *to put away sin*, by the sacrifice of himself?" Most evident then it is, that Jesus Christ is not only spoken of as a sacrifice for sin,---but that he is in truth, the *one only and great sacrifice*, from which all others derive their origin as types, or to which they bear reference as figurative allusions.

But not only does he bear the *general* character of the one great sacrifice, but to him are appropriated also all its *distinctions* and *peculiarities*.

[2. *He is, for instance, set forth as an* OFFERING FOR SIN, in the following texts. Isaiah, foreshowing his sufferings, said of him, "Thou shalt make his soul an *offering for sin*."[6] St. Paul represents God as having "made him to be *sin* for us."[7] He is spoken of as superior to the high priests under the law, inasmuch as he "needeth not daily, as those high priests, to *offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins*, and then for the people's; for this he did once, when he *offered* up himself."[8] "Christ was *once*

[6] Isai. liii. 10. [7] 2 Cor. v. 21. [8] Heb. vii. 27.

offered to bear the sins of many;"[9] and finally it is said of him, "this man—*offered* one sacrifice for sin."[1]

In support of this application of the *first* of these passages from Isaiah, I must refer to Archbishop Magee, who has vindicated this use of it against the objections of Dr. Priestley, as it appears to me, with a correctness of criticism, and force of argument which are invincible.[2] I will make, however, one or two remarks on the text from 2 Cor. v. 21. When the apostle says, that God "made him SIN for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (*τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν, ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν κ.λ.*) he evidently alludes to the *sin-offerings* of the former dispensations, both because this mode of speaking of such sacrifices, from its pervading the whole of the Greek Septuagint, was familiar to the Jews, and also from its correspondence, as we are told, with the peculiar idiom of the Hebrew. And in this sense, it has been generally understood by the most learned commentators, both ancient and modern.[3] And in-

[9] Heb. ix. 28. [1] Heb. x. 12.

[2] *Discourse*, &c. vol. 1, pp. 223—234.

[3] Among the latter may be mentioned, *Vitringa*, *Hammond*, *Le Clerc*, *Whitby*, *Macknight*, *Doddridge*, &c.; and among

deed, whether we understand the passage as meaning a *sin-offering*, or simply, that God made him, who had no sin of his own, to be *a sin* for (ὑπὲρ) us, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," we are brought to the same conclusion; for the substitution of a sinless person, for one that is guilty, in order to take away his sin and restore him to the divine favour, is the obvious and only meaning of the passage, even as thus rendered; and every Jew knew that there was only one possible way of effecting this transition, and this was by sacrifice.

The texts, then, above recited, lead us to the right view of the *nature* of our Lord's sacrifice. IT WAS AN OFFERING FOR SIN. Sin-offerings were

the former, *Gregory Naz.* thus comments upon it: Ἁμαρτία ἤκουσε δι' ἐμὲ, ὁ ἄιρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κοσμοῦ. Orat. xxxvi. *He was called sin, on my account, who takes away the sin of the world. Oecumenius,* Ἁμαρτία λέγεται τὸ ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν θῦμα. in II. ad Cor. *The sacrifice for our sins is called sin. Cyril of Alex.* says, Γέγονε σφάγιον ὁ Χριστὸς ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς· τάυτης ἕνεκα τῆς αἰτίας ἁμαρτίαν αὐτὸν ὠνομασθαι φαμὲν. In Actis Ephesinis. *Christ was made a sacrifice for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and on* THIS ACCOUNT, *we say that he was called* SIN. For other authorities, to the same purport, consult *Suiceri Thesaur.* in voc. Ἁμαρτάνω, Ἁμαρτία. κ. λ.

of such constant recurrence, both under the Patriarchal and Levitical dispensations, and so familiar to the Jews, that it was impossible for this people to dissociate the passages before us from these atoning sacrifices, unless they were admonished that they were not to be so understood. And as no such intimation is given, it is obvious that they would take them in the natural and usual acceptation. Unless, therefore, we are prepared to say that the scriptures, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, were purposely intended to lead men into error, and this on fundamental points,—we have no alternative but to admit that the death of Jesus Christ was *an offering for sin.*

We have, then, advanced a step further in proof of the atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. We had before seen that his death was offered in our place and stead, and we are now taught what was the *intention* of that vicarious substitution: it was *to remove the penalty of sin.* He was an *offering for sin.* Should it then be said that Christ merely substituted his life for ours, just as one friend might die for another, to rescue him from *any* imminent danger, and that therefore we cannot conclude any thing from this, as to the *expiatory* quality of

his sacrifice,—though it would be a sufficient reply to such an objection, that all vicarious sacrifices, from the nature of their original institution, and universal use, were *piacular*, yet these texts meet the very *letter* of the objection, and tell us that the offering was for *sin*, that "he bore our *sins* in his own body on the tree;" and, therefore, that *his death is an indispensable condition and consideration in the remission of sin.*

If any doubt could still be entertained that Jesus Christ was a real sacrifice for sin, it must be removed, when it is observed that—

[3. *He is frequently designated by* THE NAME OF THAT VICTIM, *which was daily offered under the Levitical dispensation to take away sin.* He is described as "THE LAMB OF GOD, which taketh away the sin of the world."[4] "Ye were redeemed," says St. Peter,—"with the precious blood of Christ, *as of a Lamb*, without blemish and without spot."[5] "I beheld," says St. John, "and lo, in the midst of the throne—stood *a Lamb*, as it had been slain;"[6] and he appears, in the heavens, as "the *Lamb slain* from the foundation of the world."[7]

[4] John i. 29. [5] 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. [6] Rev. v. 6. [7] Rev. xiii. 8.

What Jew could hear or repeat such language as this, without instantly associating with it, either "the lamb for a burnt-offering," so frequent among the Patriarchs;[8] or the Lamb annually offered in commemoration of the passover;"[9] or, more especially, the "two lambs of the first year, without spot," which they presented to God "day by day, for a continual burnt-offering," one of them "in the morning, and the other at even?"[1] and how was it possible, with these associations, to separate from the sacrifice of our blessed Lord the idea of an atonement *for sin?* Had such a disjunction of apparently inseparable things been possible, it was precluded, in the present case, by the addition,—in the first of these texts,—*he taketh away the sin of the world;* and,—in another,—*we were redemed by the precious blood* of this Lamb. If lambs, then, when presented in sacrifice, were ever offered up to take away sin,—and this was the daily use of them,—then must Jesus Christ, from his very designation of being "the Lamb of God," have been offered on the cross, for the real and literal purpose of taking away the sin of the world; and his *death was an indispensable condition to the pardoning of sin.*

[8] Gen. xvii. 7, 8. [9] Exod. xii. 3.

[1] Numb. xxviii. 3, 4.

But we have still further evidence of this, in various texts, where

[4. *He is spoken of as actually* BEARING OUR SINS, AND TAKING THEM AWAY. Nor is this idea of the subject to be confounded with any that have gone before. It is one of peculiar significancy and importance; because, while it represents the *nature* of his sacrifice, it points out also its *blessed effects*.

The passages on which this remark is founded are as follow: "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the *chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.* All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath *laid on him the iniquity of us all——for he shall bear their iniquities.*[2] Who his own self bare *our*

[2] Iai. liii. 5, 6, and 11. In the elegant and critical Translation of Bishop Lowth, the passage is thus given—

"But he was wounded for our transgressions;
Was smitten for our iniquities;
The chastisement, by which our peace is effected, was laid upon him;
And by his bruises we are healed.
We all of us like sheep have strayed;
We have turned aside, every one to his own way;

sins in his own body on the tree.[3] Now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared *to put away sin* (εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτίας) *by the sacrifice of himself.* Christ was once offered *to bear the sins of many.*[4] The Lamb of God, *which taketh away the sin of the world.*"[5]

In these texts, we have it distinctly stated, that our sins were laid upon Christ; that he bare them in his own body; that he offered himself a sacrifice; and that he took them away. Here, then, we have the three particulars belonging to sacrifices, the sin---the atonement—the forgiveness, as repeatedly mentioned in the Levitical law, to the following effect: "It shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of those things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing; and he shall bring his trespass-offering unto the Lord for his sin which he hath sinned---unto the priest---and the priest shall make an atonement for him as touch-

And Jehovah hath made to light upon him the iniquity of us all.
It was exacted, and he was made answerable——
The punishment of their iniquities he shall bear."

If the correctness of the authorized translation should be called in question, that of Bishop Lowth will not be doubted; and if the former support the doctrine of the Atonement, this will be found to state it in still stronger language.

[3] 1 Pet. ii. 24. [4] Heb. ix. 26—28. [5] Joh. i. 29.

ing the sin that he hath sinned in one of these, and it shall be forgiven him."[6] "He shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering, and it shall be accepted for him, to make atonement for him."[7] In these, and numerous similar passages, we have it so clearly stated, that sin (no matter, as it regards the *present* argument, whether moral or ceremonial) was to be confessed over the victim, with the hand laid upon its head,—that the victim, with this transfer of guilt, was to be offered in sacrifice,—and that the sin was, in consequence, forgiven,—as to render all comment superfluous. Let us suppose a Jew, with all his familiarity with these atonements, reading the statements of other Jews, that a victim, of a different kind, had the sins of the world laid upon him,—that he bore those sins in his own body,—and that he took them away by the sacrifice of himself,—and I ask, how is it possible he could understand such language, otherwise than he had always understood similar passages in the writings of Moses? Nor would it be necessary for the association of such ideas, that the whole process of making an atonement should be minutely detailed in all its different stages. In the law, he had often read of an atonement, without a particular statement of the

[6] Lev. v. 5, 6—8—13. [7] Lev. i. 4.

sins that required it, or the pardon which followed it;[8] he had read of the sin being laid on the victim, without the consequent forgiveness;[9] and the remission of sin, without any allusion to the atonement?[1] But the mention of any one of these particulars would naturally and necessarily bring along with it the association of the other; and wherever sin was taken away, he would be sure there had been an atonement, for "without shedding of blood is no remission."[2] The very same impression and connexion of ideas would also be produced, when he read simply of the Christian victim "bearing our sins in his own body on the tree;"—of his "putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself;"—of laying "upon him the iniquity of us all;"—of the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

These conclusions are so obvious that I waive the critical examination of some of the passages here cited, and to some of which, I am aware, Socinians have given a different construction. If it were an insulated text on which this turns, or if it were expressed in terms novel or ambiguous, it would be necessary to enter into a

[8] Exod. xxix. 36. Levit. i. 4.
[9] Levit. iii. 8—13.
[1] Exod. xxxiv. 7. Numb. xiv. 20. Heb. ix. 22.
[2] See pp. 65—67.

close investigation of its import. But here we have *many* passages, all bearing on a well *understood* doctrine, and written in language, of all others, the most *familiar* to a Jew; and I cannot think that any candid reader can, for a moment, hesitate to give them the sense for which I contend;[3] and they furnish another clear proof, that *the death of Jesus Christ is an indispensable consideration and condition in the remission of sin.*

There is another peculiarity in sacrifice to which the New Testament frequently calls our attention. *It is the blood of the Atonement.*

[5. *Christ is frequently represented* AS SHEDDING HIS BLOOD, *for the various purposes set forth in the Levitical dispensation.* It was the blood of the victim that constituted the atonement; and with this was inseparably connected the remission of sins.

It is the blood which constitutes the life of

[3] Those who wish to see the two passages from Isaiah liii. and 1 Pet. ii. 24, against which Socinians have brought their strongest objections, critically examined, and fixed to their legitimate meaning, as direct proofs of the Atonement, may consult Archbishop Magee's 42d Dissertation, vol. I, pp. 399—471, and especially pp. 465—470.

animals, and this was forbidden to Noah, when he was permitted the use of animal food: "The flesh, with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat."[4] And it was in this that the atonement specifically consisted: "The life of the flesh," says the divine Legislator, "is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; FOR IT IS THE BLOOD THAT MAKETH AN ATONEMENT FOR THE SOUL."[5] It will therefore be observed, that in every sacrifice, particular directions were given about the blood of the victim,—that it should be sprinkled around the altar; that, with it, the priests should touch the horns of the altar;[6] that the high-priest should enter with it into the holy place, and then sprinkle it before the mercy seat.[7]

Now in reference to this, particular mention is made of the blood of Christ in the New Testament. The Evangelist, St. John, records that, at the crucifixion of our Lord, a soldier "pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout *blood* and water;"[8] and of such importance did he deem this fact, that he gives his attestation of it with peculiar emphasis and solemnity: "and he that

[4] Gen. ix. 4. [5] Lev. xvii. 11. See also Exod. xxiv. 8.
[6] Levit. i. ii. iii. iv. [7] Levit. xvi. 15. [8] John xix. 34.

saw it bare record, and his record is true, and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe."[9] And no wonder that so much attention was called to this event; for it was then that THE BLOOD OF THE GREAT SACRIFICE MADE AN ATONEMENT FOR OUR SOULS; and in reference to which it is called "THE BLOOD OF THE EVERLASTING COVENANT,"[1] plainly implying that it was in relation to this alone, that the blood of victims, slain under the Patriarchal and Levitical dispensations, derived its power to atone for transgression: and if it was considered as a sin under the law, of more than ordinary magnitude, to profane the blood of a victim, it was an offence infinitely more aggravated under the gospel, to "tread under foot the Son of God, and to count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing."[2]

The texts which refer to the blood of Jesus Christ as the atoning sacrifice, are numerous and striking. Our Lord himself had it in view when he said, "This is my *blood*, which is shed for many, *for the remission of sins*."[3] St. Paul had it before him, when he represented the church of God as "purchased withh is *own blood*."[4] And all the following passages relate to the same

[9] John xix. 35. [1] Heb. xiii. 20. [2] Heb. x. 29.
[3] Matt. xxvi. 28. [4] Acts. xx. 28.

doctrine; "whom God hath set forth to be *a propitiation,* through faith in his *blood.*[5] Much more then being justified by *his blood,* we shall be saved from wrath through him.[6] Having made peace through *the blood of his cross,* by him to reconcile all things unto himself.[7] Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by *his own blood* he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.[8] Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the *blood of Jesus.*[9] The *blood* of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.[1] Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in *his own blood.*[2] Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God, *by thy blood.*[3] We are come—to *the blood of sprinkling,* that speaketh better things than that of Abel.[4] Elect—through sanctification—and the *sprinkling of the blood* of Jesus Christ."[5]

Now, when it is considered that there are between thirty and forty passages in the Old Testament, where *the blood* of the atonement is mentioned, and that there is a corresponding frequency, with which this peculiarity is alluded to in

[5] Rom. iii. 25. [6] Rom. v. 9. [7] Col. i. 20. [8] Heb. ix. 12. [9] Heb. x. 19. [1] 1 John i. 7. [2] Rev. i. 5. [3] Rev. v. 9. [4] Heb. xii. 24. [5] 1 Pet. i. 2.

the New; we cannot but admit that both design and importance are to be attached to this fact; and when we perceive that there is the *same variety* in the application of the blood of Christ, both as to the shedding of it,—to the sacredness of it, to the sprinkling of it, and its atoning effects, we cannot but conclude, that there is the same connexion between the blood of Christ as poured out on the cross, and the atonement of our sins, as there was between the blood of animal victims, and the atonement for sins under the law; and if, without shedding of blood, there is no remission "of sin," then *the blood of Christ, which constituted the atoning sacrifice, is an indispensable condition and consideration in the pardoning of sin.*

I have only to add, on the evidence arising to the doctrine of the Atonement, from the minute application of all the peculiarities and properties of the Patriarchal and Levitical sacrifices to the death of Christ, that

[6. *He is denominated, in allusion to the various atonements for taking away sin of the former dispensations,* A PROPITIATION AND PROPITIATORY SACRIFICE FOR OUR SINS.

The texts I allude to are the following: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is *the Propitiation for our sins:* and *not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*[6] Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the *Propitiation* for our sins.[7] Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a *Propitiation,* through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past."[8]

I said that Christ is denominated a propitiation for our sins in reference to the various atonements for taking away sin in the former dispensations. In order to see the force of this observation, it is necessary to remark, that the Hebrew term כפר, which is usually translated, *to atone,* is almost always rendered by the Septuagint, by ἱλάσκομαι or ἐξιλάσκομαι, *to appease, to propitiate, to reconcile, to atone.* This Hebrew word, as Schleusner states, signifies properly *to cover, to remove out of sight,* and then, *to expiate, to atone, to appease.*[9] This distinction

[6] 1 John ii. 1, 2. [7] 1 John iv. 10. [8] Rom. iii. 24, 25.
[9] "Respondet (ἱλάσκομαι) in vers. Alex. hebr. כפר quod

between its primary and secondary sense must be kept in view; because, while the latter points out the *intention and effect* of the act, the former, which necessarily carries its original idea into all its more remote uses, indicates the *means or instrument* by which the intention is accomplished. When, therefore, it is used in the sense of *expiatory, or of appeasing,* we are to understand that it effects this by *covering or removing out of sight* what was obnoxious, or had occasioned offence: and as the manner of doing this must vary with the nature of the offence, the expiation or atonement will have relation to a great variety of objects. It may regard both moral sins and ceremonial defilements, it may relate to persons, places, and things; and, in point of fact, we find this to be the case; for expiations were made for transgressions, and ritual pollutions; for individuals and the whole congregation; for the temple, the altar, and the sacred utensils: but whatever was the *subject,* the *expiation or atonement itself* consisted in *removing out of the way whatever was obnoxious.* Now, in this great variety of cases, it is with the *particular* one between man and his Creator, that we are more immediately concerned. *Man has offended his*

proprie est *tegere, è conspectu removere,* deinde vero *expiare, placare.*

God; and *sin* is the ground of that offence: and the *expiation* or *atonement* consists in *removing sin out of the way.* This, then, is the particular case, and the question is, by what means this expiation or atonement is effected? And the only answer is, by ANIMAL SACRIFICE. This was appointed for every case of transgression, whether moral or ceremonial, and "without shedding of blood there was no remission." These sacrifices *expiated, atoned, appeased;* the offence was removed, the atonement effected, and the parties reconciled. The victim then was vicarious; it stood between the offender and his Judge; it was indispensable to the reconciliation or atonement; and it was the instrument through which the cause of offence was removed. It was offered εἰς τὸ ἱλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ[6] *to make atonement for, or to expiate*[7] *the sins of the people;* and the term by which this *act* was accomplished was, in the Hebrew, the verb כפר, in the Septuagint, ἱλάσκω, ἱλάσκομαι, ἐξιλάσκομαι, and in the English "to make reconciliation;" and the *whole transaction, comprehending the result,* was expressed by the Hebrew noun כפר, the Greek ἱλασμὸς, and the English reconciliation. This word I have used as synonymous with atonement, in its strict sense, and as it is

[6] Heb. ii. 17. [7] See Macknight and Owen in loco.

evidently used by our translators, who, in the only passage in the New Testament where they have adopted it, have given it as correlative with *reconciliation*.[8]

After these remarks, we can have no difficulty in deciding that, when St. Paul speaks of Jesus Christ being the "*propitiation* (ἱλασμὸς the *expiation*—the *atonement*) for our sins," and of God "having sent his Son to be the *propitiation* for our sins," he meant, that Jesus Christ stood in the same relation between God and sinners, as the animal sacrifice had formerly done; and that, like them, he expiated sin by his blood, and thus reconciled the sinner to God.

The same conclusion will follow from the use of ἱλαστήριον, which is also rendered by our translators *propitiation*.[9] For though this term requires the application of some such noun as θῦμα or ἱερεῖον, (victim or sacrifice,) yet it necessarily conveys the idea of propitiation and atonement; and indeed, more explicitly than the former term,

[8] "We joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement," or reconciliation, τὴν καταλλαγὴν ἐλάβομεν. Rom. v. 11. In our old English writers it was formerly written At-one-ment. See *Mincheus*, *Johnson*, &c.

[9] Rom. iii. 25.

points to the *means* by which this reconciliation is effected,—the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the great sacrifice for sin: and every view we take of the subject, brings us to the same conclusion, that *the death of Christ is an indispensable consideration and condition in the pardoning of sin.*

Such, then, are the proofs from scripture texts, and the doctrine of sacrifice, of the inseparable connexion between the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the salvation of the sinner. Not only do most numerous passages of the sacred volume, expressed in almost every variety of language, plain and figurative, direct and incidental, narrative, doctrinal, and interwoven in its very texture, declare this; but also the whole fabric of sacrificial rites, and the Levitical priesthood,—constituting the religion of the faithful from the first man down to the coming of the Messiah; and most minutely, and in all its prominent parts, referred to by writers of the New Testament, and directly applied to Christ, and that in such language as could not fail to excite in the minds both of Jews and Gentiles, whose whole religion had hitherto consisted of sacrifice, the idea of expiatory, propitiatory, and vicarious atonement,—declares, with a tone and emphasis not to be resisted, that the

remission of sin is never granted but out of regard to the all-sufficient Atonement of the Son of God.

I might, then, here close the subject of scripture evidence on the doctrine of the Atonement. To those, who submit their opinions to the standard of God's word, the proof will appear complete. But as the doctrine is of fundamental importance, and is capable of further proof and illustration from the holy scriptures, I will state one or two other arguments in support of it. The first, shall be drawn from the Epistle to the Hebrews: the second, from our Lord's own explanation of his sufferings: and the third, from the grand subject of the apostle's preaching, and the success with which it was followed.

CHAPTER III.

I THINK the truth of this doctrine may be established from the Epistle to the Hebrews; and the particular argument I would urge from this epistle is, that it seems to be *the principal design of the author of it to run a parallel between the Levitical priesthood and that of Christ; and to*

show, that, in all respects, the latter was superior to the former, and the real object for which the other was instituted.

In this argument, I assume, as having been proved, that the sacrifices for sins of the Mosaic dispensation were expiatory and vicarious: and I maintain that if a designed parallel can be shown to exist between these sacrifices and that of Christ, and that, in those very particulars in which the former were piacular, the latter is shown to be pre-eminent, it will follow that the comparison of the two relates to this atoning power and intrinsic excellence; and that the latter was a real and true sacrifice for sin, and an absolute condition in its remission. Nor can this conclusion be evaded by pretending that the parallel is run between the former as *real*, and the latter as *figurative*; both because it is evident that it is in relation, not to the nature and object of sacrifice in which they are compared—for these are assumed by the apostle to be the same; but to their real and intrinsic value; and also, because, that which in either could be considered as a mere *figure*, belonged to the *Levitical* priesthood, whilst the *reality* and *substance* belonged inherently to that *of Christ*. In other words: Both of these sacrifices were equally real, but not equal in their

intrinsic value. In respect of *value*, that of previous sacrifices was merely *representative:* they had none of their own, but they borrowed one, from the sacrifice which was hereafter to be made, and of which these were mere types or shadows. It is, indeed, to the nature of this relation to each other that I shall turn my first attention; for it will be seen that, in this epistle,

1. *St. Paul contrasts the sacrifices of the former dispensations, and that of Christ, in the way of* SHADOW AND SUBSTANCE. "The law," says he, "having a SHADOW of good things to come, and *not the very image of the things, can never, with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect.* For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins."[1] Here it is assumed that these sacrifices had no inherent worth to obtain remission of sin,—for "it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin,"—and they were therefore, in this respect, only shadows: but there were "*good things to come,*" of which they had received sufficient information,—a sacrifice was hereafter to

[1] Heb. x. 1, 2.

be offered, which should release them from the guilt of sin; and, in the mean time, this benefit might be aptly symbolized by the present system, and call forth the faith of the true worshipper to that remedy for transgression, which God, in due time, would produce, as "a propitiation for the sins of the world." If, then, these sacrifices were followed only by a shadowy benefit, a benefit which was to be really received by faith in another sacrifice, then it must necessarily follow that that sacrifice, when it took place, was a *real* sacrifice, and that its results were the substance of which the former were only types. For if the shadow be a true representation of the substance, and the former were intended typically to expiate sin, what conclusion can we draw from this statement of the apostle, but that the death of Christ *really* pocures that for the believer, which was only adumbrated in the sacrifices of the Jews; and that the sacrifice he offered was as really an atonement for transgressions against the moral law, as the others were for offences against the ceremonial law?[2]

[2] See the same argument urged by the apostle in Heb. viii. 4, 5, and ix. 24. If any one should be disposed to interpret the *shadows* mentioned in the verse from which I have reasoned, as implying no more than that *the gospel is as much superior to the ceremonial law, as the substance is to the shadow*, without

2. *He also forms a comparison between* THE PRIESTS OF THE TWO DISPENSATIONS; *and this can only hold good on the assumption that the priest of the latter was as really such, as those of the former.*

"Every high-priest," says he, "taken from among men, is ordained for men, in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity." And these distinguishing and essential qualities of a high-priest, he assures us, were possessed by Christ. "In all things," he states, "it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people: for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."[3]

urging that such an interpretation would destroy the whole of the apostle's argument, let him weigh the two last quoted passages, and he will find it impossible to give such an interpretation without offering the greatest violence to common language and to common sense.

[3] Heb. v. 1, 2, compared with ii. 17, 18.

That Christ is not here called a *high-priest* by way of *accommodation* is too evident to need proof. The exact parallel which the apostle runs between him and the Jewish high-priests, in their being taken from among their brethren; in their being ordained for men, in things pertaining to God; in their appointment to offer gifts and sacrifices, and to make reconciliation for the sins of the people; and in their being subject to human infirmity and suffering, in order that they might be able to succour those that are tempted; that is, their exact conformity, both in election and office and character, proves, beyond controversy, that the priesthood of Christ was as *real* as that of Aaron and his successors. Beside, with what propriety could the apostle insist upon the *necessity* of this resemblance between the Levitical priests and Christ, if the latter were not a priest in the true sense of the word? On any other supposition than that the Jewish priesthood was typical of that of Christ, both the argument and the parallel of the apostle appear to be unintelligible. Now if it be indisputably certain that the Jewish priests offered sacrifices, and made atonement, in order to procure the remission of sin, and reinstate the offender in the divine favour, it is also equally certain that Jesus Christ made a true sacrifice and atonement for the sins of mankind.

This argument will receive additional confirmation by noticing a *superiority* which the sacrifice of Christ had over those of the Levitical priesthood; for

3. *He*, again, *compares* THE SACRIFICES WHICH EACH OFFERED UP; *and states* AN ADVANTAGE WHICH THAT OF CHRIST HAD OVER THOSE OF FORMER PRIESTS.

"Such an high-priest," says the apostle, "became us, who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; FOR THIS HE DID ONCE WHEN HE OFFERED UP HIMSELF."[4] Here, then, it is not only declared in *express terms* that Christ offered up himself as a sacrifice, in the same sense as the Jewish priests offered sacrifices,—but, moreover, the *particular end* is specified for which he offered up himself; it was not to expiate his *own* sins, (*for he was holy and separate from sinners,*[5]) as the Jewish priests were required to do; but it was to make a sacrifice for *the sins of the people;* and that, but *once*, whilst the latter were presented *daily;* for such was the intrinsic value of his sacrifice, in connexion with the spotless purity of

[4] Heb. vii. 27. [5] Ver. 26.

his nature, which needed no sacrifice on its own account, that "his one oblation," as our church has expressed it, "of himself once offered was a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world;"[6] and it was in this that his superiority over the Jewish priests chiefly consisted. Can it be doubted then, with this passage of scripture before us, whether we are to consider the death of Christ as a real propitiatory sacrifice for man's transgression?

4. *The apostle,* again, *compares the* RESPECTIVE EFFICACY *of the Levitical sacrifices and that of Christ; and decides the superiority in favour of the latter.*

It is, indeed, the drift of the greater part of the epistle to the Hebrews to show the superiority of the Christian above the Jewish priesthood; and it deserves particular attention, as affording an unanswerable argument in support of our hypothesis, that the reasoning of the apostle, in every view he takes of the subject, is founded upon an *assumed similarity and correspondence in the nature and objects of these priesthoods;* and on

[6] Communion Service.

this ground he proves that Christ's is the perfection of that of the Jews, and in every point of view infinitely its superior. Out of many passages where this comparison is formed, I will adduce but one, regarding the *relative efficacy* of the respective sacrifices: "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; HOW MUCH MORE shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?"[7] that is, if the sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of *their* blood was efficacious to the putting away of *ceremonial* pollutions, and thus fitting the individual for the external service of God's sanctuary; *much more* shall the blood of Christ purify the conscience from its *moral* defilement, and render the soul fit for the pure and spiritual worship of God. The inference from this reasoning is self-evident,—the sacrifice of Christ must be *real;* for with what propriety could it be said that his sacrifice was of more value than those of the Jewish priests, if he offered no sacrifice at all? Or how could they be compared, if their nature and object were totally different?

[7] Heb. ix. 13, 14.

The next subject of comparison which I shall notice is that in which

5. *He points out a* CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE PLACES *where the bodies of certain victims were burned, and the death of Jesus Christ occurred.*

"The bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high-priest for sin, are burned *without the camp.* Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered *without the gate.*"[8] This correspondence may appear to be minute, and merely accidental; but an inspired apostle thought it of such importance as to deserve particular notice, and considered it as having occurred by the special design and over-ruling hand of divine Providence. The fact is, that every thing in the type was appointed with the greatest precision, and with an evident intent that the minutest particular should be regarded,—an exactness which the apostle notices in another part of this epistle, and for which he assigns a very cogent reason: "There are priests," says he, "that offer gifts according to the law; *who serve unto the example*

[8] Heb. xiii. 11, 12.

and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle; for *See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount.*"[9] As if it had been said, the greatest particularity is necessary, even in the minutest thing, because the whole has an ulterior reference. These indeed are only types and shadows; and, in themselves, insignificant and unimportant,—but they relate to a substance, to an archetype, of infinite moment; and in an affair of such a nature, nothing is trivial, nothing must be overlooked; for "they serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." It is on this principle then that the burning of "the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high-priest for sin," took place "without the camp," in order that it might typify the shedding of Christ's blood without the gate; and when our Lord was crucified upon Calvary, then was accomplished the intention of this hitherto unmeaning ceremony, and then it was stamped with its due importance. But who does not see in this, a demonstration of the *real* sacrifice of the death of Christ? It would be as unreasonable to question this, as to deny that the

[9] Heb. viii. 4, 5.

animals were really sacrificed whose bodies were burned without the camp.

St. Paul points out another important correspondence between the Jewish sacrifices and that of Christ.

6. *He states, that as the high-priest, on the day of the great Atonement,* ENTERED INTO THE HOLIEST, WITH THE BLOOD OF THE VICTIM, *and there* INTERCEDED FOR THE PEOPLE; *so Christ also* ENTERED, WITH HIS OWN BLOOD, INTO HEAVEN, *and there* MAKES INTERCESSION FOR US.

"*Into the second (tabernacle) went the high-priest* alone every year, *not without blood,* which he offered for *himself and the errors of the people,*"—so also, "Christ being come an high-priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle—neither by the blood of goats and calves, but *by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place,* having obtained eternal redemption for us."——"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, *now to appear in the presence of God for us.*"[1]

[1] Heb. ix. 7, 11, 12, 24.

When the high-priest had offered the sacrifice, he carried the blood into the second tabernacle, and presented it in behalf of himself and the people. Christ did the same for us, after suffering on the cross. He entered by his own blood into heaven, and there he makes intercession for us. What does this imply, but that he made a true sacrifice for sin, and thus obtained for his people those invaluable blessings which were only shadowed forth in the sacrifices of the Levitical priesthood? Once more.

7. *In reference to the sacrifices of the former dispensation,* the apostle speaks of CHRIST'S AS THE LAST SACRIFICE THAT SHALL EVER BE MADE: and thereby evidently supposes that *it was a true sacrifice in the literal sense of the word.*

He thus reasons: "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, *there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.*"[2] As if he had said, If a man had committed a sin, such as the Jewish law had made no provision for in its sacrifices, yet there might have been some hope for him; because a more valuable and perfect sacrifice than these was afterwards to be

[2] Heb. x. 26.

offered in Jesus Christ; a sacrifice which cleanseth from *all* sin: but if he should despise this, and trample it under foot, his ruin is inevitable, because it is the last and most efficacious sacrifice that ever can or will be offered:—"there remaineth" for him "no more sacrifice for sins; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Surely this must imply that Christ's was a real sacrifice, seeing that it was the only one which could reach cases of transgression for which the previous ones had made no provision, and was that, after which no other should ever be made. I will only add, that,

8. *The apostle has also given* A COMPARATIVE ESTIMATE OF THE GUILT WHICH ATTACHES TO A CONTEMPT OF THE TWO PRIESTHOODS, AND THE PROPORTIONATE PUNISHMENT WHICH WILL FOLLOW IT: *and in doing this, he has furnished the most decisive evidence that he considered the death of Christ a real sacrifice for sin.*

For if this were not the case, however proper it might be to punish severely any disrespect to Christ, yet the *exact proportion* of this guilt and punishment could not be inferred from what was inflicted on a contempt of Jewish sacrifices, seeing

that they had no reference to each other. On the contrary, on the supposition that Christ made a *true sacrifice,* the reasoning and inference of the apostle are clear and pertinent. The passage to which I refer is this: "He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses: of *how much sorer punishment,* suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God; and *hath counted the* BLOOD OF THE COVENANT *wherewith he was sanctified,* an unholy thing, (or *common,* which has no more virtue in it than that of other men,) and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"[3] And this admonition may well close this part of the argument. If the blood of Christ *should* be the *only atonement,*—if his death *should* prove the *only ground of pardon and acceptance with God,* how awful must be their condition who systematically reject it, and venture their everlasting well-being on the UNCOVENANTED mercy of God!

To sum up then the whole of this argument, as grounded upon the comparison instituted by the apostle between the Levitical sacrifices and that of Christ, I have assumed, as being already proved, that the sacrifices of the former dispen-

[3] Heb. x. 28—29.

sations were expiatory and vicarious, and the only appointed means of obtaining remission of sins. It will not be denied that the death of Jesus Christ is spoken of in this epistle in language applied to Jewish sacrifices; and the only question is, whether this language be proper or figurative? If proper, it necessarily follows that the death of Christ is also an indispensable condition of forgiveness of sin, and the only means of obtaining it. That it is proper, I have shown from a variety of arguments drawn from the Jewish priesthood, particularly in regard to those points of comparison and resemblance which are strikingly marked by the apostle himself; such as the relation they bear to each other as shadow and substance, as type and antitype: and that the sacrifices of the Mosaic dispensation were intended to prefigure, represent, and symbolize that of Christ;—that the office of high-priest, which Christ is represented as sustaining in common with that of the Jews, proves that, in that character, he offered a real sacrifice;—that the sacrifice which Christ offered up was greatly superior to those of the Levitical priesthood, which necessarily supposes that there was a correspondence in kind, and a superiority only in quality;—that the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice was much greater than that of the Jewish priesthood, which would

be impossible if it were not a real sacrifice;—that the correspondence between the place of Christ's suffering, and that of the burning of certain victims, in the view of the apostle, was designed to represent the typical nature of the sacrifices under the law, and the real nature of that of Christ;—that the entering of the high-priest, with the blood of the victim, into the holy of holies, and the corresponding entrance of our blessed Lord into heaven, by his own blood, brings us to the same conclusion;—that the intimation that Christ's was the last sacrifice that ever would be offered for sin, supposes that it was of the nature of those which had gone before, and, therefore, that it was a true sacrifice;—and finally, that the greater guilt and punishment of contemning the blood of the covenant, shed by the Son of God, than that of despising Moses' law, whilst it suggested an awful warning not to neglect the only atonement for sin which ever had or ever would be made, furnished also a proof that it was the blood of a real victim; and that, through which alone we can obtain eternal redemption.[4]

[4] At the conclusion of this argument for the vicarious sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, grounded on the Epistle to the Hebrews, I cannot help availing myself of the high authority of Bishop Butler, in his "Analogy of Religion," in support of

It being therefore clearly ascertained, even from this single Epistle to the Hebrews, that the sacrifice which Christ made for the sins of the world, was of the same nature as those under

one or two of the points, on which I have enlarged. "He is," says that profound author, "the Lamb of God; and as he voluntarily offered himself up, he is, throughout the Epistle to the Hebrews, styled our High-priest. And, which seems of peculiar weight, he is described before-hand, in the Old Testament, under the same characters of a priest, and an expiatory victim (Isa. liii. Dan. ix. 24. Psal. cx. 4.) And whereas it is objected, that all this is merely by way of allusion to the sacrifices of the Mosaic law, the apostle, on the contrary, affirms, that 'the law was a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things;' and that the priests that offer gifts according to the law, serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to make the tabernacle. 'For see,' saith he, 'that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount;' that is, the Levitical priesthood was a shadow of the priesthood of Christ, in like manner as the tabernacle made by Moses was according to that showed him in the mount. The priesthood of Christ, and the tabernacle in the mount, were the originals: of the former of which, the Levitical priesthood was a type; and of the latter, the tabernacle made by Moses was a copy. The doctrine of this epistle, then, plainly is, that the legal sacrifices were allusions to the great and final atonement to be made by the blood of Christ; and not that this was an allusion to those. Nor can any thing be more express and determinate than the following passage: 'It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats

the Mosaic dispensation; and that these were a necessary consideration in the remission of sin, the conclusion is, again, unavoidable, that "the death of Christ is an indispensable condition and consideration in the pardoning of sin."

But we have still further scriptural evidence of the truth of this important doctrine,—and I will next proceed to show that it was most clearly taught by our blessed Lord himself. This shall be the subject of the following chapter.

should take away sin. Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering,' that is, of bulls and of goats, 'thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me—Lo, I come to do thy will O God. By which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.' And to add one passage more of the like kind: 'Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin;' that is, without bearing sin, as he did at his first coming, by being an offering for it; without having our *iniquities* again *laid upon him;* without being any more a sin-offering; 'Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation.'" pp. 383, 384. *Glasgow Edition.*

CHAPTER IV.

The truth of this doctrine may be further established BY THE EXPLANATION WHICH OUR LORD HAS GIVEN OF HIS SUFFERINGS, AFTER HIS RESURRECTION.

Two of his disciples, on the third day after his crucifixion, were conversing on the event, on their way to a village near Jerusalem; and while they were communing with each other, and reasoning on this catastrophe, "Jesus himself drew near, and went with them," but so as not to betray his person. On enquiring into the cause of their gloom, and the subject of their conversation, they inform him of all that had lately occurred in Jerusalem respecting the conduct of the Jews, and the crucifixion of Christ; and expressed their disappointment at the event, as being contrary to their expectations of what would have happened, and subversive of their hopes that he would have redeemed Israel. From which it appears that they considered the ignominious death of Jesus Christ as incompatible with the

character of the Messiah, and the Redeemer of his people. *This was the one and only cause of their perplexity.* With this exception, they would have had no doubt of his being the Saviour of the world. His birth, his life, his wisdom, his kindness, his power and his wonderful works, pointed him out as the promised seed, as the descendant of Abraham, the prophet who was to resemble Moses, and the Son of David. They had hitherto believed him to be the Redeemer of Israel, the great Personage whom the prophets foretold, and who was "the Hope of the ends of the earth." But his crucifixion was an insurmountable objection to their previous convictions; and they concluded that they had been mistaken respecting him. Hence they were greatly dejected, and felt like men whose reasonable hopes of honour and happiness were suddenly dashed to the ground; and who had nothing now to expect, but shame for their credulity, and persecution for their misjudged attachment. It was to remove the mistaken notion that an ignominious death was irreconcileable with what might justly be expected to befall the Messiah; and to show, on the contrary, that it was indispensably necessary to the accomplishment of the predictions respecting him, and the object of his mission, that our Lord entered into conversation with them, and

thus addressed them—"O fools (or inconsiderate persons ἀνόητοι) and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. OUGHT not Christ to have suffered these things, and to have entered into his glory?" As if he had said, "So far are these sufferings from forming any ground of objection to the glorious character given of the Messiah, and of his universal dominion, they were absolutely necessary to constitute that character, for it was abundantly shown in the scriptures, that he must *first suffer* and *then reign;* and that he must enter into his glory by an ignominious death;" and "beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself;"[1] not, probably, confining himself *exclusively* to his sufferings, but certainly making these the great object of his exposition;—for other things respecting him they already understood, and had concluded from them that he was the Messiah; but, on the single article of his death, they had formed erroneous notions, and it was these that he undertook to rectify.

There was a second occasion, on which our Lord entered still more fully upon the same topic of his sufferings. When the eleven were assem-

[1] Luke xxiv. 13—27.

bled at Jerusalem, and listening to the extraordinary account which the two disciples, who had lately been conversing, as we have seen, with the risen Saviour, "Jesus himself stood in the midst of them;" and after having convinced them of the identity of his person, by showing them his perforated hands and feet, "he said unto them; These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written IN THE LAW OF MOSES, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me—and he said unto them, Thus it is written, and THUS IT BEHOVED CHRIST TO SUFFER, and to rise from the dead the third day."[2]

Besides these passages in the gospel, there are several others, as we have already seen, in which our Lord speaks of "laying down his life for his sheep," of "giving his life a ransom for many," of "shedding his blood for the remission of sins," and of "giving his flesh for the life of the world:" in all of which he plainly teaches us, that neither remission of sins, nor salvation, nor everlasting life can be obtained, but in connexion with his sufferings unto death. But I do not now dwell upon these texts. I will confine my attention entirely to the two discourses just referred to,

[2] Luke xxiv. 36—46.

which were held between our Lord and his disciples *after his crucifixion and resurrection from the dead,* because they are not delivered in the way of incidental observation or casual remark, but as *arguments and reasonings* to establish the very point under discussion. They were intended to meet the very objection which is now urged against the doctrine of the Atonement, that there was *no necessity* for the sufferings of Christ to constitute him the Redeemer of Israel and the Saviour of the world; and that there is no *reference to him, in this character, in the Law of Moses, and Levitical sacrificature.* Contrary to both these notions, we have the express authority of our Lord himself.

1. *First* HE ASSERTS THE NECESSITY OF HIS SUFFERINGS: and, in answer to his disciples, who were so perplexed with the fact of his crucifixion, as to be ready to conclude from it that he could not be the true Messiah, he asks, "OUGHT not Christ (or Messiah) to have suffered these things?"[3] He repeats this necessity a second time, and says, "These are the words which I spake unto you,

[3] Luke xxiv. 26. Οὐχὶ ταῦτα ἔΔΕΙ παθεῖν τὸν Χριστὸν. Did it not behove the Christ to suffer these things? Could he have been the Messiah if he had not? For such is the obvious import of the question.

while I was yet with you, that all things *must*[4] be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses concerning me;" and, as if this were not sufficient to mark the necessity of the case, he adds again, with increased emphasis, "Thus it is written, and thus it *behoved* Christ to suffer."[5] From these reiterated declarations, that it was necessary that the Messiah should suffer an ignominious and painful death, we may conclude with certainty that he could, in no other way, have fulfilled his commission, or accomplished what had been predicted concerning him. If it had been possible that this cup could have passed from him, we are sure that when, in "his agony and bloody sweat," he prayed that it might, it certainly would have been removed; but seeing that he drank it to the very dregs, we are equally sure that he could not have fulfilled his mission without drinking it.

Now the chief character in which he had been announced to the world was that of a *Saviour:* and, indeed, in this one word may be summed up all that was foretold of his grace and mercy, of his greatness and glory, of his achievements and victories, and of the peace and happiness which should result from his kingdom and govern-

[4] Luke xxiv. 44. Ὅτι ΔΕΙ πληρωθῆναι. κ. τ. λ.

[5] Οὕτως ΕΔΕΙ παθεῖν τὸν Χριστὸν. v. 46.

ment. Hence we find that, when his first appearance was announced by an angel, "the good tidings of great joy" were comprehended in this one significant description of him, "unto you is born this day in the city of David A SAVIOUR, which is Christ the Lord."[5] It was also in this character that he was received by his disciples, and expected to "redeem Israel." But they had not sufficiently considered the means by which this salvation was to be accomplished; they were clearly enough revealed in the scriptures, but in their anticipations of the greatness of the event, they had overlooked the ignominiousness of the means; and it had not entered their minds that he was to save the world by dying on the cross. This was the lesson they had still to learn; and it was this in which our Lord so copiously instructed them, just before he entered into his glory. Hence it manifestly appears that his death was essential to his character as a *Saviour;* and it follows, as a necessary consequence, that the remission of sins is inseparably connected with his crucifixion; and the doctrine, we have seen, rests upon the repeated and most solemn declarations of our Lord himself.

This conclusion will receive additional confirmation, when we notice, in the next place,

[5] Luke ii. 11.

2. *The authorities to which Jesus Christ refers for the proof of the necessity of his sufferings.* These are chiefly, as we have just seen, in the texts already quoted, the writings of Moses; and these writings, not only *generally*, as constituting the whole of the first five books of the sacred canon, and one of the three grand divisions of the Old Testament, but *specifically* the Levitical part of them: "All things written in THE LAW OF MOSES concerning him."[6] It is to this point I wish particularly to draw attention. In "the *law* of Moses" nothing, that I am aware of, can be found as applying to the death of Christ, or to him at all—at least, with sufficient prominency to justify this particular reference—except the Levitical sacrifices. In the book of Genesis, much is written respecting the Messiah. The first intimation of a Saviour relates to him; as did also the sacrifices of Abel, of Noah, and of Abraham; the promises made to the patriarchs; and several of the prophetic addresses delivered by them, when dying, to their children; but in "THE LAW OF MOSES" there is no reference to the *death* of Christ, (and it is of this that he is speaking,) except such as may be supposed to exist in the offering of animals in the way of sacrifice. Now we have already seen that these are alluded to most frequently in the New Testament as typical of the

[6] Luke xxiv. 44. also v. 27.

death of our Lord Jesus Christ; and, taking this view of the Levitical sacrifices, we see at once the justice and propriety of our Lord's reference to them—just after his crucifixion, and on the first time of his conversing with his disciples, after he had given his life a ransom for many, and his flesh for the life of the world—as explanatory, not only of the necessity of the death he had undergone, but also of its sacrificial nature, and of its being offered up as an Atonement for the sins of the world. On reference to these sacrifices, the disciples would immediately call to mind the long-continued custom of their priests, on the annual returns of the Great Atonement, as well as of the significant ceremonies connected with the offering of the paschal lamb, and the morning and evening victims presented in the daily worship of the Temple; and would, at once, see both the exact correspondence between the types and antitype, and the necessity of his undergoing the death which they had just deplored, and considered as fatal to their hopes of his being the Messiah. In this way, then, all their difficulties would be removed; and they would themselves wonder at their own thoughtlessness, in not having previously discovered that the Messiah "OUGHT to have suffered such things," and could not have been the Messiah, if he had not suffered them.

Their inconsiderateness, however, has been the cause of great benefit to succeeding generations, because it has called forth the testimony of Jesus Christ himself to *the necessity* of his dying for man's offences; and to the *real intention* of the law of Moses. He had no sooner made the necessary sacrifice for sin, than he explained the importance of it to his disciples, and taught them that every thing in the system, which had constituted their religion, from the creation of man, and especially from the establishment of the Levitical priesthood by Moses, down to that present moment, had a direct regard to his death upon the cross; and thus, by anticipation, the great Author of our religion has himself answered the objections now brought against the expiatory nature of his death, and has taught us that there can be no remission of sin, but in relation to his sacrifice; and that there never had been any forgiveness, but in typical reference to that atonement which he had just made upon the cross.

3. Nor is it undeserving of remark, that FROM THIS TIME ANIMAL SACRIFICE CEASED TO BE A PART OF THE RELIGION OF CHRISTIANS. For although the disciples did, for a time, attend the Temple-service at Jerusalem, and conform, in other places, to the ritual services of the law, yet as their minds

became gradually more and more enlightened, they saw that the Mosaic system was superseded, that sacrifices were no longer necessary, and they exempted their Gentile converts entirely from them.

This fact is, I think, worthy of peculiar attention. A system of sacrifice had been continued, without intermission, for four thousand years, from the creation of man down to the death of Christ, in every nation, tribe, and tongue of the whole family of man. Immediately on the crucifixion of the Messiah these sacrifices ceased, and in every church, planted by the apostles, they were superseded by a more spiritual worship, and by a faith, which reposed on the meritorious death of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, instead of those animal victims, which had every where, till that time, been presented in behalf of offenders. How can this universally admitted fact be accounted for, but on the principles which are advocated in this Treatise? Does it not show, in the clearest manner, that sacrifice was originally of divine institution?—that, as it has been shown to be expiatory and vicarious, so also it was symbolical of the death of Christ upon the cross?—and that, as soon as that sacrifice had been offered, the whole system was superseded

and a new order of things introduced, by which, through faith in the crucified Messiah, the penitent sinner obtains the free and full forgiveness of his sins? These things are established, then, both by the facts of the case, the concurrent voice of the whole scriptures, and by the direct testimony, given on the specific question before us, of the very Author of our religion, our God and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We have thus brought home the evidence of this doctrine of the Atonement to the very highest possible authority; and if this be rejected, we have no common ground on which to meet those who impugn it. The controversy ceases to be with men who bear the name of Christians, and must be considered as having place only with direct infidels; and it is not with these that I have at present any concern.

It may, however, be still satisfactory to the Christian to find, that this doctrine, which has been so fully established on scriptural authority, was considered of prime importance, and was daily insisted upon, with the greatest effect, by the apostles of our blessed Lord. This shall be the subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER V.

The Doctrine of our Lord's death, as an Atonement for sin, was the constant subject of all the Apostles' preaching, and the great instrument of their extraordinary success.

1. In this statement, of course, I suppose that other topics received their due share of attention, and particularly that of our Lord's resurrection from the dead. This was the grand evidence of his divine mission, and it was urged on all occasions, both to convict the Jews of having put to death their own Messiah, and to induce others to believe in Christ as the only Saviour of the world. This event they dwelt upon as authenticating their credentials: but when they had established this fact, they seldom failed to improve it, by showing that it was from his crucifixion that the hope of pardon and salvation was to be obtained. It is difficult, in the brief narratives which are given of the first discourses of our Lord's disciples in the Acts of the Apostles, to ascertain precisely the points on which they most enlarged;

but the continual mention they make of salvation in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ would lead to the reasonable conclusion, that it was grounded on the sacrifice which he made for sin upon the cross; and the more so, as we have seen, from numerous other passages, that the remission of sins is connected with his death. Thus, when St. Peter, in his first discourse to the Jews, on the day of Pentecost, had said "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ," and the multitude cried "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" he replied "Repent and be baptized—*in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins*,"[7] it is not unreasonable to suppose that he, who had heard, on the solemn occasion of the last supper, his divine Master say "*this is my blood* of the New Testament, which *is shed for many for the remission of sins*,"[8] had a special regard to the blood of the Atonement as the only ground of hope for pardon. When again, upon another occasion, he addressed "the rulers of the people and the elders of Israel," and said, "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner: neither is there salvation in any other; for, *there is none other name* under heaven given

[7] Acts ii. 37, 38. [8] Matt. xxvi. 28.

among men, whereby we must be saved,"[9] it is natural to conclude that he had before him the discourse of our Lord, just before his ascension, when "he opened their understandings that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus *it behoved Christ to suffer*—and *that repentance and remission of sin should be preached in his name.*" If, again, we refer to the interesting narrative of the Evangelist Philip joining himself to the chariot of the Ethiopian Eunuch, and expounding to him the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, we shall come to the same conclusion: for who can doubt that, when he "preached unto him Jesus," from that affecting text, "He was led *as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his shearer,* so he opened not his mouth,"[1] he directed him to the Saviour, as "*the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world?*" The whole discourse also of St. Peter with Cornelius and his friends, seems to have been on the doctrine of the Atonement, as we may collect from the conclusion of it, in which he says, "To him give all the prophets witness *that through his name,* whosoever believeth in him, *shall receive remission of sins.*"[2] The same inference may be drawn

[9] Acts iv. 11, 12. [1] viii. 30—35. [2] x. 43.

from the concluding address of St. Paul in his first sermon at Antioch, when he said, "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, *that through this man* is preached unto you the *forgiveness of sins:* and *by him,* all that believe *are justified from all things,* from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."[3] This seems also to have been the subject of this same apostle's three days' discussion with the Jews at Thessalonica, when "he reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead, and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ:"[4] that is, he produced passages of scripture to prove that whenever the Messiah should appear, it would be necessary for him *to suffer, and to rise from the dead,*—or, in other words of this same apostle, that he should be "*delivered for our offences,* and *raised again for our justification,*"[5]—and, in point of fact, that this Jesus, whom he preached, was that very Messiah. The same conclusion may be drawn from his discourse with the elders of the church at Ephesus, when he charged them to "feed the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood."[6]

[3] Acts xiii. 38, 39.
[4] xvii. 2, 3.
[5] Rom. iv. 25.
[6] Acts xx. 28.

From these, and similar intimations of the subject of discourses preached by the apostles, immediately after the crucifixion of our Lord, we should be authorized, I conceive, to conclude, that the theme on which they constantly dwelt, and made of the greatest importance, was the death of our Lord Jesus Christ as the foundation of hope for the remission of sins. But what is, perhaps, chiefly a matter of fair inference from these brief notices of the sermons recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, is reduced to matter of fact as it regards St. Paul. I mention him in particular, because, as far as I recollect, he is the only apostle who informs us, in his epistles, what was the constant subject of his *preaching:* what was the doctrine of the rest of them, in their *writings*, we can have no doubt, from the passages already so copiously cited from almost all their epistles. This apostle has again and again assured us, that the grand topic on which he constantly dwelt in all countries, and before all congregations, was the cross of Jesus Christ. "The Jews," says he, "require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:" the former demanded some splendid proofs of the greatness and glory of their expected Messiah, and looked down with unutterable contempt on him that had suffered at Jerusalem as a malefactor; and the latter enquired what system of

philosophy was brought to light by this leader of a new sect, and what were the proofs of his superior claims to attention, either in the novelty of his discoveries, or in the wisdom of his school. To both of these the apostle had but one reply, however humiliating it might be to the one, and contemptible to the other; "*We preach Christ crucified*, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness: but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."[7] In other parts of this same epistle, he states what was the one great object he had in view in all his intercourse with the church of Corinth: it was neither to gain applause as an eloquent preacher, nor to attach himself to any party; but simply to preach the gospel of salvation through a crucified Redeemer. "Christ," says he, "sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in the wisdom of words, *lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect*."[8] "And I, brethren," says he again, "when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God: for I determined not to know any thing among you, save *Jesus Christ, and him crucified*."[9] He writes in similar lan-

[7] 1 Cor. i. 22—24. [8] i. 17. [9] ii. 1, 2.

guage to the Galatians, and says, "God forbid that I should glory, *save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"[1] And that he does not here speak of glorying in the cross of Christ in reference to his sufferings for Christ, but of Christ's suffering for us, is evident from the context; for he there speaks of persecution, or suffering *for the cross* of Christ, or for the doctrine of Christ's cross. Besides, it is not in our own sufferings, but in those of Christ, that we ought chiefly and exclusively to glory: and therefore the apostle must have regard here, as just stated, to the doctrine of Christ's atonement on the cross. Now so constantly had he insisted on this topic, in his discourses at Galatia, that he represents the suffering Saviour as having been, as it might almost be said, visibly placed before them. "O foolish Galatians," he exclaims, "who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before *whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you?*"[2]

These passages, taken in connexion with numerous others which represent all the blessings of the gospel as flowing from the mercy of God *in Christ Jesus*, show plainly in what light St.

[1] Gal. vi. 14. [2] iii. 1.

Paul viewed the crucifixion of our Lord. It was, in his mind, the only channel through which grace and salvation could flow to man; and as it was the great design of the gospel to bring sinners into a state of reconciliation with God, and as this could be effected only by the blood of the cross, as has been abundantly shown, he was therefore determined to preach the doctrine of Christ's death as the only atoning sacrifice for sin; and this, to the exclusion of every other topic which was not more or less connected with it.

Now, when we find this inspired apostle making the doctrine of Christ crucified the constant theme of his discourses, and concentrating in it all that he deemed important to man, or comprehended in his own commission from God, surely it is not too much to conclude, that it involves the whole scheme of the gospel, and is the only means by which a sinner can hope for the remission of his transgressions, and reconciliation with God.

As the apostle dwelt continually on this topic, so he found also,

2. *That the doctrine of Christ crucified for the sins of the world was the only efficient means of spreading the gospel throughout the world.*

He informs us that, whilst the Jews were offended at this doctrine, and the Greeks treated it with contempt, it was, nevertheless, "mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds," and reducing the world to the "obedience of faith." "We preach Christ crucified," says he, "to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called both Jews and Greeks, *Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*"[3] And it is an historical fact, that the most extraordinary results followed this preaching. In spite of difficulties, apparently insuperable, the work of the Lord abundantly prospered in his hands; and, published as this same doctrine was by the rest of the apostles and ministers of Jesus Christ, it spread rapidly in every nation. Multitudes, both Jews and Greeks, were converted to the faith; the temples of false gods were deserted, their altars thrown down, the kingdom of Satan fell, and that of Christ was built upon its ruins; so that, in the course of two or three centuries, the doctrine of salvation through the blood of the cross, was published through the Roman world, and was received as the faith of the kings and princes of the earth. This result, let it be remembered,

[3] 1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

was the fruit of that doctrine which I have been attempting in this Treatise to establish: and its extraordinary effects are an evidence of its truth. God owned and blessed the labours of those who published it, to an extent far beyond the reach of merely human efforts; and he has thus made known to all succeeding ministers, by what means he will accomplish the purposes of his grace and mercy to a ruined world. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Sin is no trivial affair;—it is the casting off of all allegiance to God, and joining against his kingdom in confederacy with the powers of darkness. This defection in duty—this apostasy from God—this revolt to Satan, must not be passed over as a matter of comparative unimportance. Repentance cannot repair the breach, nor atone for the transgression. The Son of God, the gift of the Father's pity and compassion to man, undertakes the desperate cause. He becomes the sinner's friend, dies "the just for the unjust," and "redeems us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us." He thus opens the way to reconciliation with God; and a commission is given to proclaim these glad tidings throughout the world. The apostles convey the message: they dwell with rapture on the compassion of the Father and the love of the Son. They can neither think, speak,

nor write on any other subject than the cross, and are "determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." God seals the truth of this message by the gift of the Holy Ghost; the understandings of men are enlightened, their hearts renewed; they turn from idols to serve the living and true God, and the ends of the earth see his salvation. And all this was the *fruit of the doctrine of forgiveness of sins by the atoning sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

I have now brought to a conclusion my argument from scripture, that the death of Jesus Christ was an Atonement and Vicarious Sacrifice for the sins of mankind; and that remission of sins is never granted but in relation to it. And if any truth may be considered as standing on an immoveable basis, it is this. We have seen, not only that the usual objections alleged against it are without foundation, but also that it is supported by the authority of every dispensation of mercy from God to man, from the first expulsion of our primeval parents from Paradise, to the last discourses of our blessed Lord, after he had made the great sacrifice, and was risen again from the dead. The doctrine is asserted or implied in a train of scripture texts which perhaps

it would be in vain to look for on any other: it is expressed in every variety of language, plain and metaphorical, narrative and doctrinal. Not only has it a pre-eminent place in almost every book in the Bible, but it was set forth in the symbols of every religion of the world for four thousand years, was embodied in every rite and ceremony of the law, introduced in every possible form into the gospel, and was the chief subject of a whole treatise in the New Testament. Animal sacrifice, which had continued nearly from the creation to the coming of the Messiah, ceased when this Atonement had been made; and from that time, this became the grand theme of the gospel, and occupied as prominent a place in the new dispensation as sacrifice had done in the old; and the effect of preaching this doctrine has been the conversion of millions of the human race, and the complete transformation of their principles and conduct. Nor has it yet lost its power: it is still the great instrument used for evangelizing the world; and still the powers of darkness yield to its force; nor will it lose its virtue till "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ."

Such is the doctrine of the Atonement: and if other doctrines have in them a portion of glory,

"this exceeds in glory," and will continue to be held in admiration while the Lamb sits on the throne, and one of the redeemed is left to say, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honour and glory and blessing."

The blessed effects of preaching this doctrine are so strikingly set forth by a late eminent writer, as well as so appropriately to that part of my subject which is now under consideration, that I cannot resist the temptation, though the quotation is somewhat long, of laying it before my readers.

"If the cross of Christ," says Mr. M'Laurin, "met with such contempt on earth, it met also with incomparable honour. It made the greatest revolution in the world that ever happened since the creation, or that ever will happen till Shiloh come again; a more glorious, a more lasting change than ever was produced by all the princes and conquerors in the world. It conquered multitudes of souls, and established a sovereignty over men's thoughts, wills, and affections. This was a conquest to which human power hath no proportion. Persecutors turned apostles; and

vast numbers of pagans, after knowing the cross of Christ, suffered death and torments cheerfully to honour it. The growing light shone from east to west; and opposition was not only useless but subservient to it. The changes it produced are sometimes described by the prophets by the most magnificent expressions; thus, for instance, Isa. xxxv. 'It turned the parched grounds into pools of waters, made the habitations of dragons to become places of grass, and reeds and rushes; made wildernesses to bud and blossom as the rose.' It wrought this change among us, in the utmost isles of the Gentiles.——But the chief effects of the cross of Christ, and which show most of its glory, are its inward effects on the souls of men. There it makes a new creation; Christ is formed in them, the source and the hope of glory.—The cross of Christ is an object of such incomparable brightness, that it spread a glory round it to all the nations of the earth, all the corners of the universe, all the generations of time, and all the ages of eternity. The greatest actions or events which ever happened on earth, filled, with their splendour and influence, but a moment of time, and a point of space: the splendour of this great object fills immensity and eternity. If we take a view of

its glory, we shall see it contemplated with attention, spreading influence, and attracting looks from times past, present, and to come; heaven, earth, and hell, angels, saints, and devils. We shall see it to be both the object of the deepest admiration of the creatures, and the perfect approbation of the infinite Creator: we shall see the best part of mankind, the church of God, for four thousand years looking forward to it before it happened; new generations yet unborn rising up to admire and honour it, in continual successions, till time shall be no more; innumerable multitudes of angels and saints looking back to it with holy transport, to the remotest ages of eternity. Other glories decay by length of time: if the splendour of this object change, it will be only by increasing. The visible sun would spend his beams in process of time, and as it were grow dim with age; this object hath a rich stock of beams, which eternity cannot exhaust. If saints and angels grow in knowledge, the splendour of this object will be still increasing; it is unbelief that intercepts its beams; unbelief only takes place on earth, there is no such thing in heaven or hell. It will be a great part of future blessedness, to remember the object that purchased it; and of future punishment, to remember the object that offered deliverance from it.

"Its glory produces powerful effects wherever it shines. They who behold this glory, are transformed into the same image. It melts cold and frozen hearts, it breaks stony hearts, it pierces adamant, it penetrates through thick darkness.

"But it is impossible fully to describe all its effects, unless we could fully reckon up all the spiritual and eternal evils it prevents, all the riches of grace and glory it purchases, and all the divine perfections it displays. It has this peculiar to it, that as it is full of glory itself, it communicates glory to all that behold it aright: It gives them a glorious robe of righteousness; their God is their glory; it calls them to glory and virtue; it gives them the spirit of God and of glory; it gives them joy unspeakable and full of glory here, and an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory hereafter."[5]

[5] Sermons and Essays, pp. 122—125.

SECTION IV.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT, AS STATED IN THE PRECEDING SECTIONS, IS NOT INCONSISTENT WITH THE NATURE AND FITNESS OF THINGS.

It is objected by Socinians, that "The notion of Christ making satisfaction for sins, and of sinners being saved on the ground of his satisfaction, involves ideas which are contrary to the nature of things." I will endeavour to show that there is no weight in this objection; and that the doctrine of the Atonement is by no means inconsistent with the established nature and constituted order of things.

CHAPTER I.

Preliminary Observations.

By "the nature of things," I suppose we are to understand that state of the world, under

which divine Providence has placed the human race: because, if we form any other idea of it, as taking in either more or less than is to be found in the present system,—*facts* as they evidently exist in the established order of things, may be as much at variance with it, as any supposed part of the *doctrine of the Atonement*, or of any other article of revealed religion; and then, we should be no more required to account for any inconsistency in one case, than we are in the other: all that can be reasonably demanded of us is, that we should show that the doctrine of the Atonement shall, in no respect, violate the grand principles which are in operation in the *present* course of things, and the government of the world.

And even in restricting the nature of things to the system with which we are inseparably connected, we must ever bear in mind that it is a system but imperfectly understood. The government itself is at present imperfect and incomplete; and is evidently a part only of another system, vastly more enlarged, and extending through a much longer duration of time. In the present constitution and course of nature, there are innumerable anomalies; and the wisest of philosophers have but groped in darkness, when

they have endeavoured to trace them to one common source, or connect them with one or more universally acknowledged principles. It should seem as if this state of things were only as a single wheel, or minute spring in an infinitely complicated piece of machinery: viewed separately, and as detached from the rest,—and this is the only view we can at present obtain of it, as seen in the book of nature,—it is impossible to discover either the suitableness of its peculiar construction, or its adaptation to the general contrivance, or the part it is to perform, in the operation of the whole. And even with the light which revelation throws upon the system, we can obtain only very inadequate conceptions of it; we see but "as through a glass darkly," and probably, in our present state, our capacity is too limited to take in more than a few minute parts of it. Till, then, we are able to reconcile all that we see around us, and all that history records, with the nature and fitness of that constitution of things, under which we are evidently placed, we shall not be justified in suspecting the truth of any doctrine, when it has an apparent foundation in divine revelation, though it may involve certain points which cannot, without difficulty, be reconciled with our notions of the nature of things. If its difficulties bear an ana-

logy to those which the constitution of nature and the government of divine Providence are constantly throwing in our way, they are no stronger evidence against the truth of a doctrine, than the latter are, of the reality of the state of things with which we are surrounded. The only question we have in such a case to solve, is its correspondence with divine revelation; and having ascertained this, we receive it as truth, though connected with matters which we may not fully comprehend.[1]

[1] It will be seen that, in the above statement, I have had before me THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION TO THE CONSTITUTION AND COURSE OF NATURE, by Bishop Butler. Those of my readers, who would form a just estimate of the difficulties which revealed religion may, in some of its doctrines, present, must consult that justly celebrated work, and especially the ii. iii. and vii. chapters of the first part; and the iii. iv. and v. of the second part. And I am happy to have this opportunity of mentioning the "Introductory Essay" of my friend, the Rev. Daniel Wilson, to this great work. Those, who may have found it somewhat difficult to follow the elaborate author of the analogy in the train, and connexion, and scope of some of his reasonings, and through the somewhat lengthened and involved construction of some of his sentences, will find, in the analysis contained in the Essay, the way made perfectly plain and easy. And those, also, who may have wished to see the argument of analogy pursued to its legitimate bearing on others of those peculiar doctrines of our holy religion, at which infidel writers have taken most offence, will be gratified in finding it carried on

The true and only correct view which can be taken of the constitution of things to which the human race is made subject, is that of a moral government,—a government of rewards and punishments, corresponding with the moral character of man. This I shall be authorized to assume so long as the analogy of Bishop Butler, to which reference is made in the preceding note, remains unanswered,—that is as long as "the constitution and course of nature" itself shall continue.

In this constitution of things, it is evident that justice must be the predominant feature: the awarding to every one according to his deeds necessarily supposes it; and to this character of it, every thing around and within us bears testimony. The final causes of things, the presages of conscience, the facts of history, the daily occurrences of life, all have this direct bearing; and all lead to the conclusion, that the throne of God, and his government of the world are established on justice. The doctrines of revelation harmonize with this view of the constitution of the world. Every threatening against disobedience, and every encouragement to virtue are in-

with a precision and force of reasoning scarcely inferior to that of Butler himself.

dications that man is regarded as a moral agent, and will be dealt with according to character.

But though justice be the predominant, it is not the only quality observable in this constitution of things. We see that the natural course of distributive justice is sometimes intercepted, and that men are dealt with better than they deserve. The appropriate consequences of vice do not always follow: sometimes they are suspended, sometimes mitigated, and sometimes averted. This takes place equally in the physical, civil and moral course of the world: and there is a remarkable analogy between the three. A vicious course of conduct, though its natural tendency be to injure and destroy the health, and it most frequently does so, yet it does not always effect this: remedies are now and then discovered, which repair the breach that licentiousness had occasioned. Crime, though commonly, does not always draw after it the penalty; it is sometimes evaded, and sometimes commuted. Nor does guilt always draw down the divine indignation: it is sometimes pardoned, and the punishment averted. Although, therefore, the constitution of things is moral, and every thing bears the prominent character of justice, yet this order of things manifestly admits of a

remedial system, and leaves a way for the exercise of mercy. This is evident to the slightest observation; and the only question is, how can qualities so discordant be brought into union? And how,—in the affair of sin, which is that only with which we are now concerned,—how can "justice and mercy meet together: righteousness and peace kiss each other?" The answer which *we* return is, by means of the Atonement: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, by becoming a curse for us." "He died the just, for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." This is *our* way of accounting for it. But Socinians are dissatisfied with this way of reconciling justice and mercy; and say that this doctrine is "contrary to the nature of things,"—is subversive of the constituted course of the world, and must therefore be rejected. Here then we are at issue, and it remains to be considered whether what has been stated in the preceding part of this treatise respecting the Atonement, is really at variance with the established order of things and the course of divine Providence in the government of the world. I maintain that it is not.

1. And let it be observed, that Socinians themselves do not suppose that sin will be par-

doned without repentance. They so far admit that the government of the world is moral, as that a distinction (slight indeed it is) will be made between the virtuous and the vicious; and that, under certain circumstances, *some* punishment of sin will be inflicted; but they contend that repentance alone is sufficient for all the purposes of obtaining pardon, and reinstating them in the divine favour, if indeed they had ever forfeited it: and that, to say that *more* than the offender can *himself* perform to ward off the penalty, is an impeachment of the mercy of God, and inconsistent with the nature and fitness of things.

But, in opposition to this, we assert that there are no proofs in the natural course of things, to show that the repentance of one that has done evil can efface the mischief of his wrong-doing; nor any evidence from scripture that God will accept of it, as the reparation of the breach made by sin. The common, and almost universal course of things is against this assumption, and furnishes a strong presumptive proof that it is founded in error. In an almost infinite majority of cases, repentance can effect nothing in favour of the offender, either for his physical or civil delinquencies; and why it should be omnipotent in moral cases, by no means appears; and,

in the face of facts of an analogous nature, all tending the contrary way, requires the clearest evidence to prove it. The argument then from analogy is clearly and pointedly against the Socinian system.[2]

[2] The observations of Bishop Butler on this point are deserving of great attention. He says, "There seems no probability, that any thing we could do, would alone, and of itself, prevent them (the penal consequences of sin); prevent their following or being inflicted. But one would think at least, it were impossible that the contrary (that is, that punishment would not be inflicted) should be thought certain. For we are not acquainted with the whole of the case. We are not informed of all the reasons, which render it fit that future punishments should be inflicted, and, therefore, cannot know, whether any thing we could do would make such an alteration as to render it fit that they should be remitted. We do not know what the whole natural, or appointed consequences of vice are, nor in what way they would follow, if not prevented; and, therefore, can in no sort say, whether we could do any thing which would be sufficient to prevent them. Our ignorance being thus manifest, let us recollect the analogy of nature, or providence. For though this may be but a slight ground to raise a positive opinion upon in this matter, yet it is sufficient to answer *a mere arbitrary assertion, without any kind of evidence urged by way of objection against a doctrine, the proof of which is not reason but revelation.* Consider, then, people ruin their fortunes by extravagance; they bring diseases upon themselves by excess; they incur the penalties of civil laws, and surely civil government is natural; will sorrow for these follies past, and behaving well for the future, alone and of itself, prevent the natural consequences of them? . . . .

2. We maintain, on the contrary, that all analogy leads to the conclusion, that sin will be

And, though we ought to reason with all reverence, whenever we reason concerning the Divine conduct, yet it may be added, that it is clearly contrary to all our notions of government, as well as to what is, in fact, the general constitution of nature, to suppose that doing well for the future should, in all cases, prevent all the judicial bad consequences of having done evil, or all the punishment annexed to disobedience. And we have manifestly nothing from whence to determine, in what degree, and in what cases reformation would prevent this punishment, even supposing that it would in some. And, though the efficacy of repentance itself alone, to prevent what mankind had rendered themselves obnoxious to, and recover what they had forfeited, is now insisted upon *in opposition to Christianity;* yet by the general prevalence of propitiatory sacrifices over the heathen world, this notion of repentance alone being sufficient to expiate guilt, *appears to be contrary to the general sense of mankind.* Upon the whole, then, had the laws, the general laws of God's government been permitted to operate without any interposition in our behalf, the future punishment, for ought we know to the contrary, or have any reason to think, must inevitably have followed, notwithstanding any thing we could have done to prevent it."

The Bishop then proceeds to show, that in this darkness of nature, revelation comes in, and points out the way in which mercy may be exercised to the sinner, in consistency with the character of God's moral government; and adds, respecting the Son of God, "he interposed in such a manner as was *necessary and effectual* to prevent that execution of justice upon sinners, which God had appointed should otherwise have been executed upon them; or *in such a manner as to prevent that*

followed with its appropriate penalty, unless averted by some foreign interposition. It is the natural tendency of sin to draw after it punishment. They stand in the connexion of cause and effect; a connexion which is never broken in the ordinary course of things. It holds in the natural and civil constitution of the world; and there is nothing, in the nature of the case, to take moral offences out of this constituted order. If the connexion, in this case, be broken, it must be by the intervention of some other cause more powerful in operation than that which it has annihilated; and revelation steps in, and informs us of such a cause. It assures us that God himself has interposed, and thus prevented the otherwise inevitable ruin of man: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish." "He died, the just for the unjust." "He became sin (or a sin-offering) for us,—that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." But, say Socinians, "this doctrine is contrary to the nature of things." If so, man

punishment from actually following, which, according to the general laws of divine government, must have followed the sins of the world, had it not been for such interposition."—The Analogy of Religion, pp. 378—380.

is indeed in a deplorable condition; for we have already seen, that nothing he can do for himself, in the way of repentance or reformation, can give him the least encouragement to hope that his sins will be forgiven, or can interrupt the connexion which the constituted order of nature declares to exist between sin and its punishment. But is the doctrine just stated really at variance with the established order and course of the world? I trust I shall be able to show that it is not;—and that there is nothing in the principles of nature, or in the divine government, which forbids the intervention of the Son of God to avert the penalty of sin from man, by suffering it himself. The general argument from analogy is in favour of this attempt; for though, of itself, it could suggest nothing certain upon this point; and had we no other argument to support our hopes of the remission of sin, than such as are founded on the fact, that many physical, civil, and moral evils do admit of reparation; and that remedies seem to have been provided in the course of nature for certain unavoidable evils, we should only have just hope enough to keep us from desperation; yet revelation disperses the gloom, and holds forth a Saviour, who is "able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him:" and now leaving the *general* ar-

gument from analogy, I will avail myself of the *particular* view of it, which the holy scriptures suggest, *between the divine and human governments;* and show, from the resemblance which these are represented as having to each other, that a just and righteous penalty cannot be gratuitously remitted; but that it may be commuted, by the substitution of another in the place of the offender; and it is this peculiarity that constitutes the doctrine of the Atonement.

CHAPTER II.

It appears from the analogy pointed out in the holy scriptures between the divine and human governments, that, though a just and righteous penalty cannot be gratuitously remitted, yet it may be commuted by the substitution of another, under certain circumstances, in the place of the offender.

Or, in other words,

Taking the character of God as it is revealed in scripture, I shall attempt to show, that the consistency of that character is involved in his executing the penalty annexed to the trans-

gression of his laws: and that there is nothing contrary to the nature of things in supposing that that penalty was executed upon Jesus Christ, when he became the substitute of sinners, and died upon the cross.

It is of importance to observe that, throughout the scriptures, when they speak of a divine government, it is with a manifest allusion to those of men, as being in their great outlines analogous. They are both moral; they excite to action by similar motives,—the hope of reward and fear of punishment; and they equally admit, under certain conditions, the exercise of mercy. They use, in the administration of them, the same terms, and recognize the same principles. It would seem, indeed, as if the divine government had derived its language from those which are common among men. The head of it is called *a prince*, a *ruler*, a *king*, a *judge*, a *lawgiver*. He has prescribed *laws*, and enforced them by *sanctions*; he has erected *a tribunal*, and appointed *a day of judgment*. Now, all these expressions necessarily point out a resemblance, *in the grand distinctive features*, between the divine and human governments; and lead to the conclusion that, in their *principles*, they are analogous: for what other idea can we attach to the use of

these terms, when found in the scriptures, than that which they necessarily convey, when applied to civil establishments among men? Unless they were intended to lead the mind into this train, they must unavoidably lead it into error. But, without dwelling longer upon this point, it may be observed, that the very term, moral government of the world, such as we have seen that of the present state is, necessarily implies an analogy between that of God and of all good governments among men. Both profess to be directed to the same objects, and to be guided by the same principles.

As justice is the predominant and indispensable quality of moral government, it may be proper to observe, that it may be considered under two aspects; one, as it regards every individual; and the other, the community of which he forms a part; and agreeably to this twofold office, justice may be distinguished into DISTRIBUTIVE and PUBLIC. The former consists in a due administration of rewards and punishments, according to personal desert. The latter has respect to the well-being of the whole. Its province is to guard the rights of moral government, and to take care that public authority be not impaired. *Distributive* justice can, in no instance, admit of grace, which consists in treat-

ing a person more favourably than he deserves. On this ground, therefore, it is evident there is no room either for repentance or atonement. But *public* justice may admit of grace to the individual, provided the general good be not thereby impaired. And as the enquiry now before us relates to the moral government of the world, it is obvious that it is with *public* justice that we are principally concerned: and the question is simply this: UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES DOES PUBLIC JUSTICE ADMIT THE SURRENDER OF DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE? That, under *some* circumstances it does admit of this surrender, is disputed by none, inasmuch as all acknowledge that some are admitted into heaven, who, according to distributive justice, or personal desert, would have been excluded. The question is, under *what* circumstances? Socinians say, merely *on the penitence of the sinner.* We deny this; and contend that something in the nature of an *equivalent,*—an equivalent in the estimation of moral government,—to the sinner's personal punishment, is absolutely necessary to the pardon of sin. Here then we are again at issue. To settle this point is the intention of the following arguments:—

This point of analogy, and the nature of the question in dispute being stated, I maintain, that

the laws of God,[3] like those of men, were intended, not for the good of the individual, in opposition to the general interest of the universe; but to promote the good of the whole, though the supposed interest of the individual should suffer thereby;[4]—that every transgression of a just law is a public injury;—that penalties are intended to repair that injury;—and that the infliction of every just and equal penalty does repair it. From these

[3] By "the laws of God," I do not here mean those *positive* precepts, which were local, and had their propriety in some peculiarity of circumstances; but those laws, whatever they may be, which are common to the whole race of mankind, which are essential to moral government, and have in them a kind of moral necessity, as arising out of the fitness of things. By "penalties," I understand whatever is necessary to enforce obedience to those laws, and to prevent the general system from being injured by a breach of them. Should any objection, therefore, be made against the meaning and application of the terms *laws* and *curse*, as they occur in scripture, to the general government of the world, it will not reach my argument. I assume only, what it is presumed no one will controvert, that there are *some laws* universally binding; and *some penalties*, adequate to the enforcement of these laws, without which there could be no moral government at all.

[4] See Archdeacon Paley's chapter on Civil Liberty, vol. ii. chap. 5, in his Moral Philosophy, in which he maintains that laws are a restraint on individual liberty, but necessary for the public good. In this distinction is virtually implied the difference between *distributive* and *public* justice.

premises, I conceive, consequences very important to the present discussion will unavoidably follow; and therefore I shall take the liberty of enlarging a little on each, and of pointing out their relation to the question before us.

There can be no difference of opinion as to the *intention* of the divine laws. That their *first* design, like those which are considered just among men, should be to promote the general good; and that the good of the individual should be only a *secondary* object, is a truth so obviously arising from the principle, that the greater good, when it cannot be obtained without the sacrifice of the less, must be secured at this expense, that this point will not be controverted. It is an affair of every day's occurrence to give up something we value, for the attainment of something on which we set a higher value; and it involves the principle on which Archdeacon Paley maintains that a portion of individual liberty must be relinquished in order to secure the public benefit.[5] It is true, all just and equitable laws do, as far as possible, aim at *combining* the public and private welfare; and it is the perfection of the laws of God, that they invariably accomplish these objects, while each in-

[5] See note, page 309.

dividual continues in his allegiance: but, in case of revolt, in which his happiness is set in opposition to that of the universe, they, in every instance, throw their influence into the scale of the latter, and seek its welfare in opposition to his. Public good, therefore, is the first design of all good laws, human or divine, to which that of the individual must necessarily be subordinate.

From this statement it necessarily follows, that every transgression of a just law is a public injury, inasmuch as every such offence makes an inroad on the welfare of the general community. Sin is therefore to be considered, not merely as a transgression of a divine command, without any other consequence than an indignity offered to God, but as that which, to a certain extent, disorganizes the whole plan of divine government, and interrupts the well-being of the universal family of man. It is not only an act of rebellion against the Sovereign of the universe, but it is a counteraction of the designs of infinite goodness towards every being in creation. The too generally prevailing notion of the *venial* nature of sin arises from viewing each as an individual offence, terminating in itself, and as unconnected with the general system; but this is a very partial and defective view of it. The first

transgression, though considered simply as an act of disobedience against God, was an aggravated crime; but how greatly was its evil enhanced, by the consideration that it made a breach on the order and harmony of the whole range of intellectual existence?

Every law supposes a *penalty*,—some evil to be sustained paramount to the evil of transgression; so that, upon the whole, when this penalty has been exacted, the general system may sustain no injury. This also evidently arises out of the nature of things. A law without a punishment is a dead letter; it is the command of a superior which may be treated with contempt, and no evil ensue. If the penalty also be *less* than the evil of transgression, the injury is only *partially* repaired. Transgression relaxes the tone of authority: a *just* penalty restores that tone: so that, transgression being taken in connexion with its just punishment, no injury upon the whole is sustained.

That this exact proportion between offences and their punishment does not exist in human governments is acknowledged; but this fact proves only the imperfection of such systems: it does not invalidate, but rather confirms the

principle upon which this position is founded, inasmuch as it is acknowledged on all hands, that the nearer the proportion between offences and their penalties, the nearer is the approximation to perfection: and in the divine government, this proportion must necessarily be exact,—the penalty is neither greater nor less than the offence deserves.

Upon the whole, then, we come to this conclusion: sin is a public evil, penalties are intended to repair that evil, and *just* penalties, such as cannot but take place in the divine government, *do* repair it.

From these positions I infer—

1. *That punishment is not primarily intended for the good of the individual transgressor, but for that of the general community.*—For if sin be a public injury, and punishment be intended to repair that injury, it necessarily follows that regard, in the infliction of a penalty, is had, not primarily to the offender, but to the collective body. It is acknowledged indeed, that where the advantage of both can be *combined*, there a good government would consult the welfare of both; but still, the main object, the grand design in every punishment is to maintain the

unimpaired authority of the laws, and the collective good of the system. So far as the good of the individual stands opposed to that of the public, so far no regard whatever is paid to him. The assassin must suffer death, rather than the laws, which protect life and property should be impaired. To suppose, therefore, that the divine punishments are of the nature of chastisements, intended only for the correction of the transgressor, is to confound the less with the greater good, and to destroy the sanctions of law and justice. If the execution of a just penalty must necessarily have for its object the individual's good, the proof of this lies with those who assert it. The two interests are certainly separable; and that which relates to the general system, is that with which the law is chiefly concerned.—I infer

2. *That a just penalty cannot be remitted by a just and good governor.*—If laws themselves be good, that which enforces them, or punishes the transgression of them, must be good also. If it were wise and proper to publish a code of laws, it is equally so to maintain it. And if it were deemed necessary, in order to secure obedience to this system, to threaten punishments, then it must be requisite also to

execute those sanctions. The law, therefore, and the motives to obedience must obviously stand or fall together. If the latter be destroyed, the former becomes a dead letter. The Supreme Being, it may safely be presumed, would not prescribe one law which is not necessary to the well-being of those for whom it was intended. Now, if it can be supposed that any one of these laws may be transgressed, and punishment be remitted, it must also be supposed that God is now indifferent to those interests which he at first consulted; and that, in order to spare a guilty criminal, he relinquishes his regard and affection for his dutiful and obedient servants. The case is a very familiar one. It supposes that a just and good governor would commit the lives and property of his loyal subjects to the disposal of the plunderer and assassin. There cannot be a doubt that a faithful and impartial execution of *just* penalties is the perfection, not only of a just, but of a *kind* government. It is true that these penalties are, and sometimes ought to be, remitted in human governments: but the expediency or necessity of this remission argues the *imperfection*, not the excellence, of all human systems. Here, penalties never can be exactly proportioned to crimes: in the same act, there may be many circumstances of mitigation, or aggravation: a variety of things may render

the execution of penalties impracticable; greater evils, in some cases, may result to the public, from the execution than the remission of the penalty: but these things constitute the peculiarity and imperfection of every thing human, and cannot apply to the divine government. In this, every thing is exactly proportioned; the degree of suffering corresponds with the measure of offence; the means are always at hand to inflict the penalty, and none are too mean to elude, and none too great to avert it: and, therefore, we may safely conclude that, in *all* cases of transgression, under the divine administration of affairs, the infliction of just penalties will take place. It is as essential to the perfection of his government, as the enacting of good and equitable laws.[6]—Hence, I infer,

3. *That if repentance be all that is required for the remission of sin,—then repentance is*

[6] What is here stated, is a necessary assumption from the perfection of the divine government. That the rewards and punishments, which will be administered in the future world, will be proportioned according to character, we have the plainest assurance from our Lord himself. "The servant," he says, "which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, but did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto

equivalent to the penalty annexed to a breach of the divine law.—This, I conceive, is an unavoidable conclusion from what has been just stated. Whatever does away the evil of transgression satisfies justice; and without such a satisfaction, it has been shown, no forgiveness can take place: if it could, the good of the universe, must, in that particular case, be given up. Now, if pardon necessarily follow repentance, then repentance repairs the breach of sin, and is equivalent to the penalty annexed to it; otherwise the breach must remain after repentance; and, for the sake of the guilty individual, the whole system must sustain an injury. Since, then, it will not be pretended that repentance repairs the evil of sin, or is equivalent to its penalty, neither can it be consistently maintained that sin can be pardoned in consideration of repentance.—I infer again—

4. *That as it is the office of public justice, to*

whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." Luke xii. 47, 48. And with regard to the rewards of the righteous, the parable of the talents assures us that they shall be apportioned on the same principle. Matt. xxv. 15, &c. It would seem as if a *capacity* for receiving happiness, or undergoing suffering, would be given to men, *according to their character;* and that that *capacity*, be it *greater or less*, will be completely filled.

maintain the authority of the law, and to protect the general interests of the community, so whatever secures these objects, answers all the indispensable claims of justice.—Public justice, in the divine government, may be considered as the guardian of the universe. It is her province, if I may so speak, to see that no breach on the public welfare remain unrepaired; and she has no other *necessary* concern with any particular individual than as his happiness or suffering may be *necessarily* connected with the universal well-being. Does he transgress? She lays her hand upon him, and demands reparation. Let this be made, and her *indispensable* claims are satisfied, though the criminal himself should escape with impunity. In this case, there is no room for complaint: the authority of no law has been relaxed,—the right of no individual has been violated,—no public good has been impaired,—and the universal system continues in the same state, as if the delinquent himself had suffered, in his own person, the full penalty of his crime. Admitting, therefore, the *possibility* of the reparation of a breach on the universal system, by any other means than that of the personal punishment of the criminal, there is nothing, in the nature of things, to prevent a commutation of penalty; because, in either

case, the good of the whole is equally secured.[7]

[7] From this statement it may, perhaps, be inferred, that the sinner, whose substitute has paid the penalty of sin, and thereby satisfied public justice, has a just *claim* to pardon; and that it is to *justice*, and not to *mercy*, that he owes his acquittal. This would be the case, if he had *himself* provided the substitute, and God had accepted it as his; for then, the transaction being immediately between the judge and the criminal, the latter would have a right to his discharge, when he had satisfied the stipulated requisition. So also, I conceive, would he have this claim, if it were possible that his *actual* guilt could be *so* transferred to a substitute, even of *another's* providing, as to become the *actual* guilt of that substitute; for then, being literally free from guilt, and perfectly innocent, justice could have no claim against him. But though some divines have expressed themselves so unguardedly, when speaking of justification by faith in Christ Jesus, as to convey this idea of the transfer of guilt, it cannot possibly take place. Sin can never be so imputed to Christ, as that he should become *personally* guilty, and an *actual offender;* though it may be, and is, so imputed, as that he should be *treated* as guilty and a sinner. The *character*, however, of both the sinner and his surety continues just as it was; and God sees it exactly as it is,—the sinner as guilty,—and Jesus Christ, as "holy and harmless and separate from sin." This view, then, of the subject leaves the sinner, as far as respects his legitimate *claims*, precisely where he was. He is a transgressor, and therefore amenable to the tribunal of justice, and can look for his acquittal to no other source than the gratuitous mercy and favour of God. It is true, a door of *hope* is opened. A Saviour has appeared. A vicarious sacrifice has

In human governments, perhaps, it is impossible, in some cases, to separate the punishment

been offered. Assurances of mercy have been given: and means provided, whereby God can "be just, and yet the justifier of him that believes." Without these, his case would have been desperate: but now light breaks in upon his darkness. A surety has been found. Terms of reconciliation have been agreed upon and ratified. A system of *grace* is established: and he may now approach, even with boldness, "the throne of grace;" and plead there, all that has been done and promised on his behalf; and there learn how God can be "*faithful and just* in *forgiving* his sin;" and how he may be "*justified* freely by his *grace*, even *through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*" These are remarkable texts, and directly meet the objection alleged against our statement of the doctrine. They show that divine justice has, in no respect, been compromised,—that God is still "*faithful and just;*" and yet that he can exercise *grace and mercy:* and the *mean* by which these apparently opposite qualities are brought together, is precisely that which has been stated as satisfying public justice,—it is "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." And if this passage (Rom. iii. 24, &c.) be connected with its following context, it will be seen, still more clearly, that God *never has pardoned* sin, but in perfect consistency with his *justice;* for Jesus Christ was set forth as "a propitiation" expressly for the purpose of vindicating this quality of his nature, when he passed by the sins of former ages;—it was "to *declare his righteousness* for the *remission* of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." The transaction, then, as it regards the opening of a way of salvation, being, if I may so speak, entirely between the Father and the Son, excludes the sinner from every pretext of claim,

of the individual from his offence. This impossibility, however, does not arise from the nature of things, but from the peculiarity of the case. No one has a right to offer himself, when life has been forfeited, to suffer in the place of another; nor has any tribunal a right to accept the voluntary surrender of such a life: for though justice might, in this particular instance, be satisfied, yet it would be injured in another, and therefore the public welfare would ultimately suffer by such a substitution. This, however, is a diffi-

as a matter of justice, to his acquittal at the bar of judgment. And, indeed, considering the subject merely on the ground of public justice, no reason can be assigned why a judge should *necessarily* accept a substitute of any kind; and many reasons might be given why he should not, except under very *peculiar circumstances,* accept of him at all; and if there were no other, for this reason alone, that, in accepting such a substitution, an *unreformed* character might again be sent forth into the world, to repeat his offences. But in the gospel, provision is made for *this very peculiarity;* for it is the province of the Holy Spirit, as our church expresses it, "to sanctify all the elect people of God." No objection, therefore, can lie against this view of the subject, as destroying the freedom of divine grace, and making remission of sins a *debt,* which the sinner may *claim* as his due; for whatever provision has been made for repairing the evil of sin, *that* is entirely irrespective of any thing which the offender has done; and he continues still a criminal, without any legitimate plea, on the score of distributive justice, against the sentence of condemnation being pronounced against him.

culty limited to human governments, from the necessarily circumscribed powers with which they are invested, and cannot be pleaded against that with which we are now concerned,—the government of God.

Hence I infer again,

5. *That there is no absurdity or inconsistency in supposing that Jesus Christ has paid the full and equivalent penalty of sin.* If it has been shown that there is nothing, in the *nature of things,* to prevent the substitution of another in the place of the offender, so as to preserve the public good from sustaining injury, it will follow that there is no absurdity in the doctrine of Jesus Christ bearing, in his own person, the sins of men, and making satisfaction to divine justice, as the sinner's substitute. The only question to be resolved is, whether his sufferings and death be really such an equivalent for the persons whom he represents, as satisfies the indispensable demands of divine justice; that is, whether he *has* made such a satisfaction as fully answers the purposes of God's moral government, and prevents any injury to the general system by this commutation of penalty? The *possibility* of such a satisfaction is, I think, very clear; the *fact* can

be established only by the revealed word of God. It is the province of reason merely to prove that there is *no absurdity* or *contradiction* in the doctrine; its *truth* is matter of pure *revelation:*[8] and having shown that there is no impossibility involved in the doctrine we maintain, *in the nature of things*, we have next to consider whether there be any in the *peculiarity of the case*. And

[8] "In this darkness, or this light of nature," says Bishop Butler, "call it which you please, *revelation* comes in; confirms every doubting fear which could enter into the heart of man concerning the future unprevented consequence of wickedness; supposes the world to be in a state of ruin, (*a supposition which seems to be the very ground of the Christian dispensation*, and which, if not proveable by reason, yet it is in no wise contrary to it); teaches us, too, that the rules of divine government are such, as not to admit of pardon immediately and directly upon repentance, or by the sole efficacy of it; but then teaches, at the same time, what nature might justly have hoped, that the moral government of the universe was not so rigid, but that *there was room for an interposition to avert the fatal consequences of vice;* which, therefore, *by this means*, does admit of pardon. Revelation teaches us, that the unknown laws of God's more general government, no less than the particular laws by which we experience he governs us at present, are compassionate as well as good, in the more general notion of goodness; and that *he hath mercifully provided that there should be an interposition* to prevent the destruction of human kind, whatever that destruction unprevented would have been." *Analogy*, pp. 379, 380.

here we have no light but what we derive from the word of God. Sin, we know, is an evil beyond all the powers of human calculation; and whether any substitute be equal to bear its penalty, we cannot ascertain by the efforts of unassisted reason: it seems clear that no *finite* being could do so. But "to the law and to the testimony." Here we find Jesus Christ,—"the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person," and "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God,—made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,"[9]—"to redeem us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us."[1] We therefore conclude, that Jesus Christ has really paid an equivalent penalty for sin, and made satisfaction to divine justice for the transgressions of mankind. God must know the extent of the penalty he has annexed to his laws; he also must know the value of his Son's death: he has, in various forms, declared himself satisfied with it, and therefore we may be sure that it is such an equivalent for

[9] Phil. ii. 6—8.

[1] See the passages quoted pp. 194—199.

the penalty of sin as satisfies the full demands of his moral government. *Reason* admits that this was *possible; revelation* declares the *fact;* and therefore we may be certain of its reality: and hence we believe that the Atonement of Jesus Christ was a satisfaction for sin. I infer, lastly,

6. *That to look for salvation in any other way than by the Atonement of Jesus Christ, implies an expectation, either that the established order and nature of things may be changed; or that the penalty may be fully discharged by the offender, and he survive the payment.* It appears, I think, from what has been said, that the *goodness,* as well as *justice* of God, forbids his remitting the penalty annexed to a breach of any of his laws. To do so, would, in effect, be to repeal that law; it would be to annihilate that, which his wisdom had before determined to be essential to the well-being of his creatures;—a mutability of conduct which cannot attach to Him, "with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning." We ought never, therefore, to forget, that the execution of a just penalty, or its equivalent, is as essential to the character of the Deity, and as much a part of his goodness, as the appointment of just and righteous laws; they are one and the same thing. Now, as all have

become obnoxious to the penalty, it follows, either that we must sustain it in our own person, or in our substitute, or that it may be evaded. If the last, whether by tears of penitence, or in any other way, then the established order of things may be set aside, the general system of the universe be deranged, the interests of every intelligent being in existence be disregarded, and the immutability, wisdom, and goodness of God himself be arraigned;—and all this, for the sake of a rebellious subject, who has presumed to lift up his arm against the everlasting God, and renounce allegiance to the universal King! But if the penalty be paid in our own person, then justice takes its course on the individual transgressor. Whether the sinner will survive that punishment, and, having "payed the utmost farthing," come out from his prison-house, is not now the question. This is matter of pure revelation, and an enquiry of greater importance cannot engage the thoughts of him, who ventures his soul on the issue. If he make a wrong conclusion, the consequence will be unspeakably dreadful and irremediable. There remains, then, but one way for the sinner to escape punishment; and this is, by a transfer of the penalty from him to a substitute, provided one could be found willing and sufficient to bear it. That such a transfer is not incom-

patible with public justice has, I think, been proved: whether a proper substitute could be found is another question,—a question which probably could never have been solved by any *à priori* reasoning. And we may well be thankful that, in an affair of such magnitude, we are not left to the deductions of reason. Revelation, as we have seen, comes in to our aid, and directs us to "one mighty to save;"—and who is represented as the *only* one equal to the task of redeeming sinners to God; for "there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," but that of Jesus Christ. "To trample," therefore, "under foot the Son of God, and account his blood" common, must be to cut off all hope of salvation, and to incur the risk of not surviving the payment of the penalty of sin. One, and only one way is pointed out in the scriptures:—we cannot avail ourselves of it, and reject it at the same time; and, therefore, if we deny the virtue of Christ's sacrifice to exempt the sinner from punishment, we make ourselves responsible for all our transgressions, and must inevitably bear our curse. Under these circumstances, we should do well to ponder the question, which God himself has asked: "Can thine heart endure, or can thy hands be strong, in the day that I shall deal with thee?"

Upon the whole, then, it appears that the moral government of God, and the welfare of the whole human species, are involved in the due execution of the penalty denounced against sin: and that, to pardon transgression at the expense of the threatening, would be an evil of incalculable magnitude. The penalty is of equal importance with the law it enforces: remit the one, and you give up the other. Forgive sin upon *milder* conditions than are necessary to support the authority of the law, and you commit a proportionate injury on every being comprehended within God's moral government. Repentance, as the ground of forgiveness, is totally out of the question,—unless it can be shown that repentance does away the evil of transgression, which no one has ever yet pretended. It appears, however, that a commuted equivalent penalty is not inconsistent with the principles of moral government, nor injurious to the collective interests of the system. In considering the death of Jesus Christ as "a sacrifice for sin," we look upon it as such a commuted penalty—fully answerable to all the indispensable claims of public justice. We do not, however, pretend to ascertain the exact demerit of sin, nor the precise value of the atonement. It is sufficient for us to know that he, who understands the evil of the one, has appointed the other as its complete

remedy; and hence we hesitate not to call the death of Christ, "a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

The doctrine, then, of the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus Christ being the only condition and consideration, on account of which God ever pardons sin, is as consistent with the constitution and course of nature, as displayed in God's moral government of the world, as it is with every part of his revealed word. Revelation and moral government have both the same author; and, as they must, so we have seen, they do, speak the same language. In one, the language is clear, decisive, and copious; in the other, it is more obscure, and conveyed in intimations and analogies; but still, as far as the latter can be understood, it is consentaneous with the former; and presents nothing which can fairly be placed in collision with it. God and nature both declare that repentance cannot constitute a sinner righteous; and, while *the latter bears testimony that it is possible, nay, that it is not improbable, that a compassionate Father may make an effectual interposition to rescue man from ruin;—the former assures us that he has "set forth his*

Son to be a propitiation for our sins," *in order that* "*whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;*" and we, therefore, fully believe that, in Christ Jesus, "we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches" of God's grace and mercy to a ruined world.

I have now brought to a conclusion my argument on the Doctrine of the Atonement; and have, I trust, satisfactorily shown that, when divested of extraneous matter, and placed on its scriptural ground, as being a necessary consideration or condition in the remission of sin, it is not liable to the objections usually alleged against it: but, on the contrary, that it rests on the immoveable basis of the inspired volume; and is, in no respect, at variance with the constituted order and fitness of things. It is the grand Subject of Revelation. It is the only Foundation of Hope. It is the everlasting Song of the Redeemed in Heaven.

THE END.

ERRATA.

Page 26, l. 12, after *long*, insert *ago*.
147, l. 3, for *first*, read *just*.
168, l. 5, after *and*, insert *then*.

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